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THE LONE SCOUT

THE LONE SCOUT

A TALE OF THE
UNITED STATES PUBLIC
HEALTH SERVICE

BY
EDWARD CHAMPE CARTER

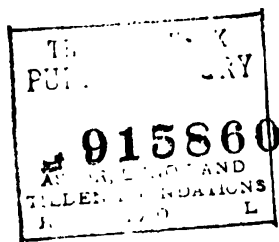
WITH A FOREWORD BY
WILLIAM C. GORGAS
Surgeon-General, U. S. A.
(Retired)



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To
"WARDY SCOUT"

DEDICATION

Where laughter, gems, and passions melt,
'Tis whispered in each white salon
That, once-upon-a-time, there dwelt
A prisoner at Chalon.

And then, though say it 'neath your breath,
(Tiny Marquise, thy tears fall fast;
Such gentle tears!) There dwelt till death
A man in iron mask.

Far out the river glides away,
From further shore the children call;
And now, in glorious peace, the day
Kisses my city wall.

Strange, that within my buttress'd town,
Watching the sun's shaft pierce the gloom
My heart can still with peace abound—
Because my roses bloom!

Ah, take this book, dear Golden Head;
Fair boys, and brown boys, read a while;
Just care for it—my rose is dead
Unless you smile.

Some gentle heart grieved o'er Chalon.
Some pity soothed poor Iron Mask.
Some star-eyed child of Avignon
Smiled up and laughed.

Read with me, laugh with me, use these toys
In black and white. My smallest arts
And but to gladden brown-cheeked boys;
Fun for young eyes, young hearts.

Officers, *Boy Scouts*, Sailor men,
Pass o'er the screen, work to resume.
Good-bye! Good-night! Thank God that when
Boys laugh, my roses bloom!

FOREWORD

THE control of malaria is a matter of the highest importance in the United States, as it is everywhere that this disease prevails. The method of election is the prevention of the production of Anopheles mosquitoes by destroying their breeding places. Every agency that can help to that end should be so utilized.

It is to the credit of Mr. Carter that he has originated the idea of thus using the Boy Scouts. In this book Mr. Carter develops the idea of using this organization in a campaign for the control of malaria by preventing the breeding of Anopheles mosquitoes.

Considering how efficient this organization has been in other work, there is every reason to believe it would be efficient in this also.

W. C. GORGAS
Major-General U. S. Army (Ret.)

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THE LONE SCOUT

CHAPTER I.

"But all we ask, if that befall,
Is this. Within your hearts be writ
This single-line memorial:—
He did his duty—and his bit!"

IAN HAY.

"Wide awake, watchful, full of fun—
I've had my knocks. I've had my joys.
In fact I'm like the general run,
Of Service boys."
From "THE SAGA OF AN UNSUNG SERVICE."

"COOKIE"

He had been christened William Prendergast Hoover, but his real name, as any of his brothers in the Bulldog Patrol could have told you, was Billy; First Class Scout Billy Hoover, of Troop Number Two, Charleston, South Carolina, with the two green bars of a patrol leader on his left sleeve, together with six Merit Badges, namely—the small figure of a swimmer, for swimming, with breast, crawl and side strokes, on the back as well as on the stomach; clenched fist, for physical development; a tiny red heart, for personal health; an

ancient lyre, for music; a "bull's eye" target, for marksmanship, and a fat little kettle, for cooking.

Now the dream of Billy Hoover's life was to win the badge of a Life Scout—a heart shaped affair with the insignia of a First Class Scout in the center, a fleur-de-lis, with the United States coat-of-arms on it, and with the world-famous motto "Be Prepared" on the scroll beneath it. It requires only five Merit Badges to attain this dizzy height, but, unfortunately for Master Billy, the badges must be for certain especial things, and Music and Cooking are not among them, while Public Health, and First Aid, and Life Saving, or Pioneering, are. Billy felt quite sure that he could qualify in Life Saving, if only some other boy would be obliging enough to fall into Charleston Bay and try to drown, but the torch badge for Public Health and the red cross for First Aid, filled his youthful soul with despair. Regularly he came up before his local scout council to try for these branches, and regularly he failed, for one of the members was on the State Board of Health for South Carolina, and by the end of the very first question he had poor Billy in a state of sulky mystification, in the vain attempt to tell him the "chief causes and modes of transmission of the following diseases: tuberculosis, typhoid and malaria." It was the last mentioned of this trio, malaria, that

was the casus belli, for the doctor was an enthusiast on malaria transmission, and required a far greater knowledge of the subject than was ever dreamt of in the Official Hand Book.

As to First Aid, it was always a failure from start to finish, for Billy was as sound of body as a young elephant, and sick people in general, but sick boys in particular, worried him mightily.

He was one of six children, three girls and three boys, and he was next to the youngest, being just fourteen years old. All the others were thin and dark and rather frail, all presenting the most beautiful clinical picture of malaria had the scout had the wisdom to study them, but Billy himself was well grown for his age, with a tall, solid young body that would have been too plump but for the fact that it was very muscular and as hard as nails. He had one of the most engaging faces imaginable, the skin as pink and white as a girl's, under a thick mop of crisp, yellow hair that was inclined to stand up on his head, straight from his "widow's peak", and to curl a little, too. In his round face were set a pair of large, dove-like eyes, darkly violet and possessed of a gently smiling, pleading expression under their thick lashes, many shades darker than his golden head, an expression that utterly belied the mischevious character of their owner. He never tanned to amount to any thing, and the

ivory whiteness of his smooth body filled his heart with disgust.

Just now he was in no very good humor, for all the Spring he had been caddying at the Charleston Country Club, and selling papers after school, yes, and even singing as alto in the cathedral choir, so that he could save up his money and go on the "big hike"—a trip to the Virginia Blue Ridge, in June. Now, with June almost gone, he was still in his own state, only a few hours railroad journey from home, with the rest of the Bulldogs, especially his chum, Tod West, joyously camped somewhere among the distant mountains, himself the lone scout of the patrol, and a pretty sulky scout at that!

The trouble was that Billy's big brother had at once gone into the Navy at the declaration of war with Germany, and, with a fearfully inopportune choice of time, his small brother, Teddy, had developed peritonitis, and was even now in a hospital in Charleston, while the forty-five dollars that represented the entire amount of Billy's savings up to date reposed in the pocket of the surgeon, who had performed laparotomy, along with a hundred or so of similar dollars, earned with the sweet tempered patience that was a part of Billy's widowed mother's share in life.

She had never asked the boy for a cent of his savings, but she did tell him the heavy ex-

pense that Teddy's illness had caused her, and so Billy, with all the deep love that he felt for her shining in his dark eyes, had simply laid his little roll of bills in her lap and then, after she had kissed him, he had gone out into the back yard and cried, big, husky fellow of fourteen though he was.

Mrs. Hoover had been a Charleston Prendergast before she was married (and none of you boys, unless you have lived in that southern city, can quite know what a fearsome thing it is to be "a Charleston anything"!) but her mother had been a Boston woman, named Mary Hollis. One of her second cousins, Francis Hollis, was a sanitary engineer in the U. S. Public Health Service (formerly the Marine Hospital Service) and, on hearing of the plight into which his relatives had fallen, he came down from Washington and gave them all the help they would accept, little enough unfortunately, for such is the way with "a Charleston Prendergast."

"You know, Frank," Mrs. Hoover said, after she had told her cousin of Bill's generosity, "it is terribly hard on the child, being here in Charleston, and all his boy friends away. If only the choir work continued in the summer it would be some help, but the cathedral disbands its choristers the first week in June. I wish I could send him into the country, but,

frankly, Frank, I need every penny the little chap makes."

"Now look here, Mary," Frank Hollis said suddenly, "I'll do what I can for that boy. He deserves it. The best thing I can do is to get him some work. He will be moping around here all summer if I don't. The Surgeon General has planned to establish a lot of sanitary work all through this state, and, at the suggestion of Dr. Fenton" (Billy's friend on the State Board of Health) "we will begin with a small camp, as headquarters, over in the Bull Creek district, just outside of Dolittle."

"Dolittle?" from Mrs. Hoover, with a slight smile, "Then I am sorry for you, Frank, if you have to be on duty there. It is an ugly section of South Carolina, the only redeeming feature being "the Folly Quarters", that beautiful old plantation that lies to the north of the village, and that belongs to the Browns. They have had it since before the American Revolution, though I understand that Senator Cubb thinks of buying it."

"Yes," Mr. Hollis responded drily, "I rather think the Hon. Jeremiah Cubb will buy it, which may explain the interest that your Board of Health takes in the sanitation of that section first, for I understand that mosquitoes are on the rampage down there. It is just possible, you know, Mary. Well, anyway, we are to establish a camp in the Dolittle neighbor-

hood, a sort of a temporary headquarters, and I am afraid that John Iron is to be in charge. He is an awful old bear, and has been in such frantic altercation with the municipal authorities at New Orleans that the Washington Bureau must give him some other station. The real soul and life of the thing, though, will be Ian Whitlock, one of the Assistant Surgeon Generals, and, as you know, he is a regular Bayard, a gracious, polished man of the world, with a reputation as a sanitarian, that extends from Tokio to London and from New York to Bahia and Rio. We call him "the Chief," and he is a wonderful man, all through. His chief of staff is that idiot, Jimmy Neems, a full Surgeon, like old Iron, and he is no addition to the Service. I hope that every Anopheles—malaria mosquito, my dear—may find him as charming as I did not. I served with him in Cuba, at Matanzas, and then, had him for coffee, breakfast and dinner for three whole, hateful years in the old Panama days. Now, if you can only think of something that your Boy Scout could do in camp, I—"

Mary Hoover began to laugh softly, though her busy fingers never dropped a stitch in the stocking she was knitting, a roll-top, scout stocking for her son.

"The very thing, Frank," she said gaily "He can cook."

"You mean to tell me that you wish to con-

sign our poor old stomachs to the tender mercies of a fourteen-year-old, Mary Hoover?" Mr. Hollis cried in good-natured surprise.

"I most certainly do mean it, Frank," the lady laughed back, "and the aforesaid aged stomachs might seek farther and fare worse. Billy is a first rate cook. He prepared your entire breakfast this morning. Why, he has a merit badge for cooking, in his scout troop."

"Which means just nothing at all, my dear," Mr. Hollis smiled, "for I can roast potatoes, bake a Johnny cake and cook a hunter's stew myself, thank you; but those hot rolls and that cheese omelet at breakfast are too strong a recommendation to pass unnoticed! If you are willing, and if the youngster has enough sense not to be ashamed of the work, as I believe he has, you may consider him already engaged as a cook for Camp Ross, the salary to be \$50.00 per month."

And so it was settled and, a week later, First Class Scout Billy Hoover, in the olive drab shirt, short khaki pants, bare knees and rolled down stockings of his scouting uniform, found himself in the nest of cabins, among the pines, on Bull Creek, in the county of Dolittle, about three miles from the village of that name, regularly installed as a "Cookie" for the United States Public Health Service, quite determined to do his best now that he had be-

come "a Service boy", but gloomily certain that nothing of interest could possibly happen so near home, while up in the Blue Ridge something was sure to happen every minute.

CHAPTER II.

"Hostess: Here's a goodly tumult! I'll forswear keeping house, afore I'll be in these tirrets and frights. So; murder, I warrant now!—Alas, alas! Put up your naked weapons, put up your naked weapons!"

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

"The Army drab, the Navy blue,
Help mighty empires 'raise a fog',
They help 'emselves, but Me and You,
(*The Service*) help the under dog."
From "THE SAGA OF AN UNSUNG SERVICE."

WHERE NOTHING EVER HAPPENS

Camp Ross, named in honor of the great Sir Ronald Ross, who established the fact that malaria was conveyed to man through the agency of a mosquito, looked very peaceful, though hot, late one afternoon, and Cookie, seated before the door of the two room log cabin that served half for storeroom and half for kitchen, passed one damp arm across his dripping face, and over the crisp mass of his upstanding hair. He had discarded everything except the short khaki pants and the lightness of a sleeveless, gauze undershirt, and

yet he was fairly baking as he peeled potatoes, in company with an aged negro, named Pete. Except for these two, the camp was deserted, for the small force of doctors and the two sanitary engineers, with their assistants, were out somewhere in the broiling sun, on field work, with the exception of one unfortunate young officer who had been sent up to address a set of school children on Sago branch, for the very first time in his life being forced to make a speech. The main work at present was to do some ditching, after Mr. Hollis had made his sanitary survey, so that the meadows about camp could drain into Bull Creek.

I say that the camp was deserted, save for the young scout and the old negro, and so it was, unless you care to count a pair of vicious mules, known as Ike and Bob, grizzled veterans of most evil repute, who drew any thing from a dirt scoop or a plough, to a quite startling vehicle, probably an heirloom, that was known at Camp Ross as 'Old Ironsides', and that was popularly reported to have cost a fabulous price in the days of its youth and beauty. On the rare occasions of its paying a visit to the nearby village of Dolittle, it was always occupied by Senior Surgeon John Iron, and its advent in front of Habakuk Meers' general store, and also post office, was always greeted by faint cheers, an occurrence that enraged its irascible occupant mightily. Old

Uncle Pete was invariably to be found on the box at these times, and, as both he and the ancient equipage had belonged to the Brown family in anti-bellum days, he explained that the comment it excited was all due to a traditional admiration and veneration on the part of the "po' white trash", for "ole marse Warfield's ca'aige".

Small, puffy little clouds of red clay dust down the winding road from Dolittle proclaimed the coming of a rider, and Billy raised his eyes with excitement, rejoicing openly; for any one was welcome to him on a hot, lonesome afternoon like this, when there was nothing to do for the next hour but to peel potatoes and to sing softly, old Pete adding a sweet, shaky tenor to the Scout's low contralto:

" 'Swing low, sweet chariot,
Goin' fo' ter carry me home!
Swing low, sweet chariot,
Goin' fo' ter carry me home!

Ah looked at ma hands, an' ma hands looked new,
(Goin' fo' ter carry me home!)
A troop ob angels comin' into view,
(Goin' fo' ter carry me home!)' "

and so on through the endless quaintness of the old negro hymn. A rattle of wagon wheels, coming from the opposite direction as the rider, made the scout feel quite gay.

"Yay, Uncle Pete," he cried with enthusiasm and shying a bit of potato at an empty wooden water bucket, "Watch me hit the bull's eye every time! Ping! Told you so. Gee, I hope that wagon stops here! Goody, that's just what it's going to do! And here comes that horse—no suh, it's a mule—but he's going to stop here, too! Isn't that great, Uncle Pete?"

"'Evenin' stranger!" called one of the men in the wagon—there were three of them, and a dusty, slab-like woman. "Got a go'd o' water, sonny? Ma 'lowed she mus' hev a drink or bus'," and he let out a toothless cackle.

He was not over fifty and was dressed in dirty overalls, and a straw farmer's-hat, with a shoestring interlaced through the base of the crown to make it fit. The other men were very much like him, except that one was very old and weazened and tiny, and the other was quite young, probably not more than eighteen or nineteen.

"Wanta drink, Pap?" he of the dirty overalls howled, taking the brimming gourd dipper that Billy handed him and offering it to the old man.

"No, no," the aged one piped, shaking his bald head emphatically, "I don't want nothin' ter do with it. It mought be pizened, Henery. Them Federal doctors air campin' here, an' they do say they're a crazy lot. Why, Ma says

they're a' lookin' fer skeeter aiges!—to cook 'em, I reckon." and he laughed shrilly, and then began to cough.

"Pap's a cute one, Pap is!" the youth in the wagon chuckled, then, noticing the approach of the mule, he added in a sing-song drawl that they all used: "Ef it aint Gopher Bean! Evenin', Gopher. Been to the mill?"

"Nope," answered the Gopher, a thick set, sun browned lad of fifteen, like the rest in overalls and straw hat, "I been to town, Jim. Big doin's in town, too," and he let his muscular young body slump down in the saddle, while he scratched one bare leg with some show of enjoyment.

"What's he say, Henery?" the aged one piped. "Somethin' wrong in the town? Ef that's so, I ain't a-goin' nigh it," and he shut his old mouth with a click of finality.

"Pap's the cutest ole critter fo' his eighty-fo' years, I ever see," Jim Bode (the family were all named Bode) cackled hilariously.

"But you will be a-goin' to town though, Mr. Bode," the Gopher grinned, "when I tell you what's been gone, an' went, an' done thar. It's the pow'fullest, awfulest, whoppin'est, dare-devilest—"

But here "Ma" took a hand:

"Drat that Gopher Bean!" she said with much asperity, "Aint you got no sense, you

fool boy? What's the pow'fullest, awfulest, whoppin'est—an' all the rest of it?"

Gopher Bean winked at Billy, and wrinkled his snubbed, freckled nose in huge enjoyment, pushing the mat of tousled brown hair off his forehead:

"Why the highwayman, Mis' Bode," he drawled with the utmost glee.

"A highwayman, in Dolittle? Fo' the land o' Goshen!" Ma cried, while the aged one proceeded to scramble down, with the help of a deeply interested, though grinning, Boy Scout.

"I be a'goin' to walk back home, Henery," he piped in agitation, "An' ef you was anything of a proper man-sized man, you'd be pow'ful 'shamed to take a po' ole critter like me right into the hands of sech! When I was a lad—an' a fine, strappin' one I was, too—over in the old country, I'd a' been 'shamed to death to do the like."

"Heah, heah, Pap," the youthful Jim called, "Git back in the wagon. Papa aint so crazy to go meet a highwayman, I'll bet," then, in an aside to Billy Hoover, "Pap's the cutest ole critter fo' takin' care o' hisself, Pap is," and he spat most expertly on the wagon wheel.

"Did they catch the highwayman, Gopher?" Henery asked, offering his son a bit of cut plug, which the latter took absently.

"No, sirree," the boy on the mule laughed. "He got clean away, I bet."

"Who'd he highway?" Ma demanded eagerly.

"Well, you'd be just plum emazed ef I tol' you, ma'am," Gopher Bean grinned slowly, after which he scratched his brown leg once more, and became exasperatingly silent.

"Fo' two pins I'd slap that face of yours, Gopher Bean," Ma cried in exasperation, "Go on an' tell yer tale—I suspicion thet et's a whole possel o' lies—an' then shet yo' mouth."

"Ma's sorter riled, Gopher," Jim Bode chuckled, and the Gopher giggled happily. He was enjoying himself thoroughly now.

"Peers that way, Jim," he assented graciously. "Et was this a'way, Mis' Bode. Ole Habakuk was a-settin' in his sto' las' night." 'bout nine o'clock, and he was all by hisself."

"Habakuk Meers, you mean, Gopher?" Ma interrupted.

"Yes ma'am." The Gopher responded with gentle politeness.

"Then et just serves the ole fool right fo' settin' up so late." Ma flung out severely. "Any Christian oughter be in bed befo' that."

But the aged one began to chuckle, quite as the maddest of wags might have done.

"When I was in the old country," he piped, with pride, "Out in Wessex, us boys used ter set up nigh to twelve o'clock, every Saturday night 'most."

"Aint he the cutest ole critter fo' eighty-fo',

you ever saw, Gopher?" young Jim laughed admiringly, "An' can't he tell the durnest lies?"

"Git along with thet story, Gopher Bean." Ma struck in pettishly. "An' do shet yo' mouth, Jim Bode. Et were ole Habakuk Meers thet was highwayed, were et?"

"Yes ma'am, thet's who et were. Well, he says a feller comes in an' aks him fo' a plug o' Niggerhead, and jus' as he was gittin' et, he sees the feller pointin' a pistol in his face. Hab lows he weren't one mite skairt, but I know better'n that, an he hit right plum out at the feller, but the feller knocked him down an' traumped on him just scan'lous, an' then tied him to a cheer."

"Lordy, lordy," from Ma, with a keen relish for the news, "but aint thet awful? My, my, what sorter man was it, Gopher?"

"W-well," the Gopher drawled, "Hab said et were so blamed dark-like in the sto' thet he couldn't see the feller's face good, but he was pow'ful big and strong, an had a yaller beard. He stole some vittles and—"

"Well?" from the rest eagerly.

"Well, he took the mail bag, too, the one fo' the north."

"Say," Billy Hoover cried suddenly, "That's just tough! We had heaps of stuff in that bag, I bet, for Washington. And, hully-gee! Yes suh, cousin Frank had some glass test tubes

in a box with skeeter larvae in them, and I reckon the old eggs will all spoil, for sure. Aw, Gee! are you all going? I'll give you some apples if you'll stay. They are some swell apples, too. Honest they are. Please stay around a while, wont you?" but he only spoke to a cloud of dust, for "Pap," "Ma", "Henery" and "Jim" were fast disappearing down the road, homeward bound, while a laughing Gopher galloped after them on his mule, vowing most cheerfully, and at the top of his young lungs, that he was "'most skairt ter death, hisself" and further that he "sho' did hope they'd all see home once mo', " but that he "was plum sure none of 'em ever would."

"Marse Billy," came the voice of old Pete, "I reckon I better go see Bru'er Phillips 'bout dis. Yas suh, I sho' had better see 'im."

"Who's Brother Phillips, Uncle Pete?" Billy demanded crossly.

"He a man o' God, Marse Billy." Pete replied solemnly. "Black wif out, but purest white wif in. I knows, chile, kase I helps pay his salary."

"But why in time do you want to run off and see him now?" the boy asked a bit helplessly. "There's not a soul in camp but you and me, and the rest wont be back before eight, and—I reckon I'm scared a little—anyway, I don't feel good, Uncle Pete, so I wish you'd stay."

"Lordy, Marse Billy," the old negro said comfortingly, "Highwayman aint goin' ter do nothin' ter a po' li'l boy like you, less he ties you to a tree an' takes yo' clothes, an' licks yer, so don't you worry. He wouldn't do nothin' mo'n that, Marse Billy."

"Well, I think that's a whole lot, myself." Billy flushed, though he grinned in spite of himself. "And I think you might stay, Uncle Pete."

"Ah jus' cyant do et, honey," the old man said regretfully, "kase de Spirit tells me ter go an' seek out Bru'er Phillips. Dis county es sho' in need ob de prahyers ob de faithful. Yas Lord. Um-m-m!" and he ambled off, an old muzzle loading shot gun slung over his shoulder.

Billy Hoover watched his departure with ever rising indignation, but at last he managed to laugh a little.

"Blamed if he isn't scaredder than I am," he said sheepishly.

Going into the cabin he locked the door of the windowless storeroom carefully, took down a small Winchester 22—his own property—and seating himself on the round log that served for a doorstep, he scratched his yellow head with nervous thoughtfulness, and gazed down the dusty road toward the village, the gun across his bare knees.

CHAPTER III.

"And still on a winter's night, they say, when the wind
is through the trees
And the waves are like ghostly galleons, tossed upon
angry seas,
And the road is a ribbon of misty light, over the purple
moor,
A highwayman comes riding,
Riding, riding,
A highwayman comes riding, up to the old inn door."
ALFRED NOYES.

"An' our skins went creepy-creep,
But we simply *had* to peep,
In that shadowed bastian—Hey, 'twas witches' noon!
Was he really darkly bad?
Or some sun-browed fisher lad?
Out standing in the shimmer of the moon.
Ah, that naked, boyish swimmer,
Flashing fairly in the shimmer,
Of a pathway to our tropic moon.—

'Hush! 'Tis the Pirate's son!' we said:
'Quick, Service boys, race back to bed!' "
From "THE SAGA OF AN UNSUNG SERVICE."

THE HIGHWAYMAN

Billy waited, nervous, but resolute, for something to happen, and of course nothing did happen—it never does if you sit and wait for it—then, as it was half-past six, he remembered

that his cousin, Frank Hollis, had expressed a wish for chicken pie, and that he had carefully boiled the chickens in preparation for it, the earlier part of that afternoon:

"Aw, Pshaw!" he grunted as he rose to his feet, "I'm getting mighty scary in my old age! If that highwayman should come here, he couldn't do much to a fourteen year old kid, and, anyway, that pie wont wait any longer. Those fellows will want their 'chow' at eight, sharp. I've got the store-room key in my pocket, so that's just about all I can do, anyway."

Taking his rifle into the kitchen with him, he laid it on the rough pine table, and then went in quest of flour, cold water, salt, lard and so forth for his pie. He was awfully proud of his pies, was Master Billy! Getting down a big, earthenware bowl, he sifted a quart of flour into it, having first mixed in a teaspoonful of salt. Then he dug out a cup full of lard and set it in readiness on the table with a cup full of cold water. Then he dug several dents in the flour, and stuck a small piece of lard, and about one third as much butter, into each dent, after which he dived his tough, white arms into the bowl, working the lard, butter and flour together, adding just enough of the water to make the mass adhere, and singing lustily as he did so:

" 'Things has changed about de place, de darkeys is no mo', Ah'll nebber hear 'em singin' soft again—
An' de only thing dats lef me am dat little dog o' mine
An' ma little ole log cabin in de lane.' "

He sang the negro dialect as easily and naturally as only a southern boy can, the while he took down a rolling pin and a smoothly planed board of cedar, dusting both with flour. Then he picked up the dough, in an elastic, solid mass now, and laid it on the board, rolling it out quite gently to about an inch of thickness, after which he jabbed many holes in it with his index finger, placing more dots of lard in each hole. Then he dusted the whole with sifted flour, rolled it up and began to work it once more, for to make really good pie crust you must be possessed of the patience of Job. During the kneading process his voice dropt to a soft hum:

" 'Dar was an ole nigger, an' his name was Uncle Ned,
An' he libed long ago, long ago.
He had no hyar on de top ob his head,
In de place whare de hyar ought ter grow.' "

Once more he gently rolled out the dough, and once more he prodded it with a stout finger, and added the lard, dusting it again with flour, after which he rolled the whole mass, now feathery and flaky, but quite firm, into a wide slab, about one fourth of an inch thick:

“ ‘Hang up de shubble an’ de hoe.
Hang up de fiddle an’ de bow.
Fo’ dars no mo’ work fo’ po’ Uncle Ned,
He has gone whare de good darkeys go.’ ”

Scout Billy now became very brisk. Seizing a porcelain lined pan, about four inches deep, he lined it with dough, cutting off the overhanging edges with a knife and rolling them out again on the board for an upper crust. Then he took the chickens, two aged hens too tough for any fate other than boiling, disjointed them, and cut their meat into good sized pieces, from one to two and a half inches. After that he turned his attention to the stew in which the hens had been cooked. To this, after heating it on the stove, he added six boiled potatoes, cut into small cubes, a bunch of parsley, a teaspoonful of whole cloves, a teaspoonful of dry mustard, salt and pepper, and then thickened it all by adding a mixture made by making a paste out of one third of a cup of flour, a tablespoonful of butter, and enough milk and water, in equal parts, to make a thick, creamy substance. As he poured this into the stew, he stirred the boiling mass briskly, and sang an old deep-sea chantey, the cheerful purport of which was to the effect that he was “all among the dead men.” Finally, he placed the chicken, in a pile, in the pan and pouring the thick, soupy mass over it he added the top crust, and stuck little holes in it with

a three pronged, steel fork. Gazing at his handiwork with frank pride, his yellow head cocked on one side, he picked up the pan and slid it into the oven, which was only moderately hot.

"I bet Cousin Frank will be tickled silly with that pie," he exulted, "And if he aint, he ought to be. It's just bee-yu-tiful! For the rest I'll give them hot Johnny Cake (any scout can make that), a jar of that strawberry jam Mamma sent me, the rest of the cold ham, mashed potatoes, and coffee, and I'm sure that's nice enough for the King of England." Then, without a word of warning, his fists clenched at his sides and he uttered a frightened, breathless little scream, while a most disagreeable amount of cold sweat broke out all over his tough, satiny young body.

Clean and sharp in the growing dusk he could hear the thud of a galloping horse, coming nearer and nearer, and Billy's heart kept accurate time to those beating hoofs. His hands and arms still dusty with flour, he grabbed his small Winchester, and ran to the door, lifting it to his shoulder as he did so, just as the horse, a beautiful animal, swung into the clearing about Camp Ross, and its rider vaulted to the ground.

"Now you just stay right where you are," the scout called, steadying his boyish voice the best he could, and devoutly thankful it was a

contralto instead of a soprano, though a basso profundo would have been still more to his liking. "If—if you come one jump nearer, I'll kill you, honest."

"Aw, what's eatin' you, anyway?" came back a gruff response in a boy's voice, "I reckon I can come to see you if I want to. That's a nice way to treat a fellow! pointing an old gun at him!"

Billy Hoover, with a great wave of relief, looked at his guest, and as he did so he lowered his rifle, turned quite pink, and then grinned:

"Yay, Wardy," he giggled, utterly abashed at his mistake, "You just about scared this Boy Scout to death."

"Huh," from Wardy as he trotted up to the cabin and sat down on the single step, "Then you're lots more scary than I thought, Billy Hoover. I thought you scouts had some spunk."

"We have got spunk," Billy flung back stoutly, "but honest, Wardy Brown, I—I was looking for a—a highwayman," and he burst out into his own, good-natured laugh.

"Well, I'm sure I don't look like one, do I?" Wardy demanded with a growing resentment, "I may be pretty tough, but I'm not that bad."

He certainly did not look like a highwayman. He was just Billy's age, but at least three inches shorter, and as sturdy and solid as a boy could be. He had a lot of fluffy, tow-

colored hair, just now crammed under an old, weather beaten hat of brown felt, stuck on the back of a round head. Out of his sun browned, jolly face, a bit sulky just now, looked a pair of very big, practical blue eyes. With the tip of his tongue just peeping from between the lips of his wide mouth, he gazed on Billy sullenly.

"Gee, but you're a nice boy, Billy Hoover," he said. "I reckon if I hadn't of spoken when I did I'd have gone back to the Folly Quarters with a hole in my tummy from that old bean shooter of yours."

Billy resented the disparaging remark about his Winchester, but he kept his temper like the good scout he was, for he was fond of Wardy Brown, the little he had seen of him, and he was sorry for him too, in many ways.

Warfield Edward Brown, for that was the tow headed youngster's real name, was the last of his family that was left. He owned the big plantation that was called the Folly Quarters, and lived there with his guardian, who was also his tutor, and with a few of the old servants that had belonged to his grandfather before the Civil War. He had met Billy twice before in Charleston, after Easter services at the great Cathedral, and twice since the scout had been a Service "Cookie."

"You can laugh at me, and guy me, all you want, Wardy," Billy said, "but the Bode family

were here a while ago, with a kid they called Gopher Bean—tough looking guy, but ever so funny—and what they had to say about that robbery over at Dolittle made my hair stand right up on end.”

“Huh,” Wardy grunted, though he grinned too while he passed one hand up and down the stout calf of his bare leg, “I wish you’d tell me when it ever did any thing else. You’re just crazy in the head with the heat, Billy, or you wouldn’t ever think of a highwayman clattering up the way I did. Gee, but I’m dirty, Billy. I’ve been ploughing.”

“Aw, don’t let’s talk about ploughing, boy,” Billy cried earnestly. “As to that highwayman, you don’t know just what a highwayman might do. They don’t always come sneaking up on soft, little footsies, ’cause in Treasure Island, when old Pew and that crowd attacked the Inn, they made a lot of racket. Say, Wardy, what you think of this robbery, anyhow?”

“I don’t think any thing about it at all,” Wardy said crossly. “I wish you’d quit talking about it, ’cause I’m not one bit interested in it myself.” Then, looking at Billy with a mighty scowl, he grabbed his gun. “I’m a bad boy, I’m a bad boy!” he grinned cheerfully, “And I’ll show you how a highwayman can carry on, if you want. See that old crow out yonder? Bet you I can hit him first shot.”

"Get out, Wardy!" Billy laughed. "You couldn't hit him for anything."

"Watch me," was the cryptic reply, whereupon Wardy blazed away at the crow several times, until the magazine was empty, but the bird hopped easily away, for not a shot came near him.

"Some shot, Wardy!" the scout jibed good-naturedly. "Now if I had any more cartridges over here, which I have not, I'd show you how to do it."

"Ain't you got any more?" Wardy asked with interest.

"No, that is, not over here. There are some in Dr. Iron's cabin—the Executive Building we call it—but that's way over there under those pines. Say," feeling in his pocket, "I have got just one left."

"Then let me see you hit that old crow."

Billy took the gun, cuddling it to his shoulder with the skill that comes from long practice, looked down the sights, re-aligned them a bit, and then fired, and the crow toppled over at once.

"O-o-oh!" from his tow-headed companion, "If I'd known you could shoot like that I'd never in this world have tried to—" then, stammering and turning quite white under his tan, he added "I—I mean I'd never have shot at all myself. You're just a wonder, Billy. Sure that's all the cartridges you got?"

"Sure thing. Why what's the matter with you, anyway? You're as white as any thing. Not feeling sick, are you? What is the matter, Wardy?"

"Nothin'!" Wardy laughed shakily, changing from white to a shamed red, "Thinking about your old highwayman, I reckon," and he whistled suddenly, possibly from a desire to appear at his ease.

"Wardy! Quick! What's that?"

Turning a dismayed, startled face on his companion, Billy grabbed him by the arm, and as he did so a sturdy, youthful figure sprang past him from the doorway, giving the scout a swinging blow on the side of his head, and as the boy stumbled and fell on his face, in a little heap, the figure bounded over to Wardy's mare, swung himself into the saddle and galloped out of the inclosure and up the road.

"You're not hurt, are you Billy? Aw, Gee, please say you're not much hurt, wont you?" Wardy asked, as a big tear tumbled down his straight nose, quite unheeded. He was anything but the crying sort, and so Billy was amazed.

"No indeed, old scout," he said quickly, as he picked himself out of the dust, "I'm just plain mad. Say, don't look at me like that, Wardy. I'm not mad with you. That fellow gave me a beautiful wallop, though, and my head does ache some! Shall we chase after

him? I've got my Winchester, you know."

"Sure I know," Wardy answered very soberly, his round face very uncomfortable, "But you haven't got any thing to load it with, not here I mean. Anyway, he's on my Beauty horse, and she's the best traveler in this county."

"That's so," the scout cried contritely, more distressed for Wardy now than for his own bruised head, "I—I certainly am sorry, Wardy boy. Here I've been thinking about this old yellow head of mine—and it's had lots worse knocks before—and yet you've lost your mare."

"Y-yes, I'm just awful worried about it." Wardy answered, but somehow he did not seem to be worried about it at all, though he was still very near crying.

"Wonder what he stole," Billy said briskly, to give the other boy a chance to pull himself together. "He couldn't get in the pantry, 'cause I have the key in my pants pocket. Food is so awful high now that Cousin Frank and the Chief told me to be mighty careful. Well, I've got the key, and—" then he stopped dead, his face quite blank, for, sticking on the outside of the store-room door, was the key. "Gee!" poor Billy gasped, regaining his voice at last, "The pantry's open, and—and I bet he's taken most every thing!"

"No he hasn't, Billy," Wardy called from the

depths of the store-room which he had entered, "He—he only took a ham."

"Then I bet it's the ham we bought from you, doggone it," Billy growled. "And those Folly Quarter hams are just splendid. I was saving it for Buster's birthday. Is it that ham from the Folly Quarters, Wardy?"

"Y-yes suh—Billy, I mean." Then, with a sound very like a sob, Warfield Brown brushed passed the scout, his childish face working rather piteously, and muttering to himself, these quite non-understandable words:

"I'm a bad boy! I'm a bad boy! It aint never nothin' but a ham" (in his grief forgetful of grammar). "It aint never nothin' but an old ham, b-but I'm a bad boy. I'm going on back to the Folly Quarters, Billy, and—and I'll send Uncle Ned over here with a ham for—for Buster's birthday party, you see if I don't. You're the only kid around here that it's any fun to play with. It must be great to be a Boy Scout and have lots of chums, and live in a real city like Charleston. I'm going on back to the Folly Quarters, Billy. So long."

"Look here, Wardy," Billy struck in sturdily, "What is the matter with you? There isn't a bit of sense in your calling yourself a bad boy—'cause you're no such a thing. You didn't hit me on the side of the head, and you didn't take that ham. I'm tickled silly he took nothing else. Why, Wardy, you lost your

mare, and that's heaps worse. I reckon that's why you're all worked up. You're such a lot of fun, 'most all the time, that it sort of scares me to see you like this. I wouldn't worry about the mare. I bet we catch that thief."

"Gee!" from Wardy, his own tow head beginning to bristle like a youthful hedgehog. "D-don't you talk like that. 'C-course I hope you do catch him, but as to my Beauty horse, I reckon she'll find her way back to the Folly Quarters all right. Good bye, scout. I'm awful glad you're not hurt much, and—and say, I'll send you that ham, a real nice one, you just see if I don't, so there won't be any use talking about it, will there?"

He asked the question so wistfully that Billy grinned in spite of himself.

"But we've got to tell the officers about it, or they can't help to find your horse," he said.

"That Beauty horse'll come back home," Wardy replied solemnly, "so just you please shut up, Billy, and I'll shut up, 'cause there's enough row at Dolittle already."

"Not a circumstance to what it'll be when the federal authorities get on the trail of that highwayman," Billy flung back cheerfully. "I tell you, Wardy, robbing Uncle Sam's mail isn't a joke."

"Robbin' the mail?" young Warfield wailed, consternation on his smooth face, and utter terror, too. "Who robbed the mail? It—it

was old Habakuk Meers' store that was robbed. They—he—he stold a—a ham, only a ham, Billy. Honest that was all. Where'd you hear about the mail?"

"Why, Gopher Bean told about it," Billy explained.

"Then that Gopher Bean's sillier than I thought he was!" Wardy grunted, a sudden scowl on his nice face, and, doubling up his fists truculently, he strode away, with only a gruff "So long, Billy, I'm going back to the Folly Quarters—but I'm going to punch somebody's brown head for 'em, first. See if I don't," and he looked sturdy enough, and mad enough to do it, too.

CHAPTER IV

"Oh, weren't they the fine boys! You never saw the
beat of them,
Singing all together with their throats bronze-bare;
Fighting-fit and mirth-mad, music in the feet of them,
Swinging on to glory and the wrath out there."

ROBERT SERVICE.

"We cleared the Hook, we crossed the bar,
Each with his kit, his woes, his joys—
Ship Island, Naples, Panama,
It's all the same to Service boys."
From "THE SAGA OF AN UNSUNG SERVICE."

THE "CHIEF" AND HIS "BOYS"

Six-thirty A. M.! Breakfast should be nearly ready, but it isn't! Squeals and whoops of rapturous joy come from the kitchen, where "Cookie", a big white apron, with a bib, tied about his body, is deep in the first part of Ian Hay's "The First Hundred Thousand." The book is propped before him at one end of the kitchen table, and as he reads he stirs, very lamely, I am afraid, at something destined eventually to become what he calls "batter cakes", a simple batter made with four eggs, the yolks and whites beaten separately, three

teaspoonfuls of sugar, one of salt, and one of baking powder, the last mentioned mixed with enough flour to make a thick, creamy batter, after the yolks of the eggs, the sugar and the salt have been stirred together with three cups-full of very rich milk. Finally the stiffly beaten whites are folded in, and there you are! All now that is needed is a very hot griddle, greased for each new batch of cakes with a bit of bacon rind.

It seems doubtful, just at present, as to whether the batter and the griddle will ever meet, for Billy has been stirring the former for the last half hour.

"Gee, but it's just great!" he chuckles, referring to the book, not the batter cakes, "I bet Sub-Lieutenant felt ashamed, alright. I know I would have been my own self."

He had been reading the account of the time that an unfortunate subaltern, after a serious discussion of when and where and how to salute, held with two other young fellows of the same rank, all equally in dead earnest, unwisely took the matter to one Captain Wagstaffe, the humorist of his battalion, and that sportive officer said he would refer it all to "the Deputy Assistant Instructor in Military Etiquette", as the matter was of the gravest importance. Later, he presented the unfortunate subaltern with a carefully typed report, claiming to come direct from the Captain's

mysterious official, and it was the reading of certain extracts printed from this paper that was the cause of the lateness of breakfast at Camp Ross, and of Master Billy's joy, too. The whole thing tickled him immensely—

“ ‘Special Cases,’ ” he read, a wide grin on his mouth: “ ‘(a) A soldier, wheeling a wheelbarrow and balancing a swill-tub on his head, meets an officer walking in review dress.

Correct Procedure.—The soldier will immediately cant the swill-tub to an angle of forty-five degrees, at a distance of one and one half inches above his right eyebrow. (In case of Rifle Regiments the soldier will balance the swill-tub on his nose.) He will then invite the officer, by a smart movement of the left ear, to seat himself on the wheelbarrow.

Correct Acknowledgment.—The officer will comply, placing his feet upon the right and left hubs of the wheel, respectively, with the ball of the toe in each case at a distance of one inch (when serving abroad at a distance of $2\frac{1}{2}$ centimetres) from the centre of gravity of the wheelbarrow. (In the case of Rifle Regiments the officer will tie his feet in a knot at the back of his neck.) The soldier will then advance six paces, after which the officer will dismount and go home and have a bath.’ ”

“Wonder if that really happened?” Billy muttered quite wistfully. “I sure hope it did. I’ll ask Buster about it, when I give him ‘The First Hundred Thousand’ for his birthday. He’ll know all about it, even better than the Chief, though the Chief just about knows everything.” Then, glancing at an Ingersoll

dollar watch, "Gee whiz! It's 'most six-thirty-five, and I haven't sounded Reveille! Got the flag up, though, an hour ago, thank goodness!"

Grabbing a battered cornet, that for six long months had been the joy of his heart, he strode to the open doorway (carefully screened with fine copper netting, like all the log cabins), and placing the instrument to his lips, let it ring out the call, not the true Reveille, but "Boots and Saddles", thinking the words of the old cavalry jargon as he played:

"Come all that are able,
Go down to the stable,
And give your poor horses some fodder and corn!
For if you don't do it
The Colonel will know it
And then you will rue it as sure as you're born!"

A wiry, red-brown head, with the hair cut "Teddy Bear", or, as the French put it "en brosse", was poked out from the door of the nearest cabin, to be followed promptly by its owner, a tall, freckled face young fellow, bare footed and in pajama trousers only, his lean body, muscular and white below the bronzed line of his throat and reaching in a sort of V down his breast, flashing cheerfully in the sunlight that sifted through the great pines. He was a very young man indeed, in his earliest twenties, and just how he had managed to get an A. B. and an M. D., and to serve a whole

year as an intern in a hospital, before getting his commission, was one of the Seven Wonders of the U. S. Public Health Service. He looked much more as if he should have been at prep. school somewhere than to be a commissioned officer, and this, added to his really tender years, made his fellow officers call him "The Boy", or just "Boy", when they did not call him "Pepper"—a fact attributable to his freckled face. His name was Theodore Williams Sloan, known at home as Teddy, from his crisp red hair as well as an abbreviation. He was quite tall, very athletic, and was the wag of the camp.

"Ah, have a heart, have a heart, Cookie!" this slightly clad individual cried. "That's just an awful awakening to give a fellow!"

The scout grinned.

"Thought you said 'Boots and Saddles' was such a pretty old tune," he jibed, leaning comfortably against the door casing.

"So it is a pretty tune, when you don't have to tumble out of bed to it," Pepper answered reproachfully. "I'm as sleepy as anything. Had a beastly night, too. Dr. Neems tossed about from one-thirty on, calling most fearfully upon the name of one Evelyn, and I hope to goodness that Evelyn heard him, for I know I did. Then Spot got to laughing, and I had to sit on his golden head. It quieted him wonderfully, you know. I was ever so pleased with

the result. I do wish you wouldn't wake the others, to say nothing of my august self, so very early in the morning, my dear scout."

"But it's not early, Dr. Sloan," Billy laughed back. "It's as late as anything, nearly quarter to seven. You know I'd be tickled silly if I could let you sleep, and I'd tote your breakfast to you, at Buttercup cottage, anytime, like I did the other morning, when the Chief was at Mobile."

"Hold on there, Cookie" the cheerful Pepper smiled, "Since when has my official residence become Buttercup cottage?—It used to be Spiders'-Rest when we Assistant Surgeons occupied it to ourselves. Has the advent of Surgeon James Montgomery Neems altered it?"

"Oh, no sir," the scout answered with another grin. "Dr. Neems hadn't a thing to do with it, honest. But you see, I've swatted all the spiders, so it would be just silly to call it Spiders'-Rest any more. Anyhow, I found about nine buttercups under the eastern window the other day, so I thought Buttercup cottage was as good a name as another. Had your bath, doctor?"

"No, not yet, but I'll race down to the swimming hole and be back by the time you have breakfast on the table. Couldn't you delay the meal, well, say for about ten minutes, Billy?"

"Sure I could," from the friendly scout, who was greatly attached to this young officer, "I'll see you're not one bit late, sir."

"You are a good little sort, Billy," Pepper flung back over a departing shoulder, "and something of a brick, too. The Chief hates us cubs to be late, he is so distressingly punctual himself."

By this time other doors were opening and the occupants of other cabins began to stroll toward a large oak, beneath which the officers' mess ate their meals in good weather, and where the breakfast table was already set.

"Morning, Billy," called another young Assistant Surgeon, by name Spotteswood Welford, a Virginia boy, and already alluded to as "Spot", "Breakfast ready?"

"N-not quite, doctor," Billy answered, returning the officer's good-natured salute with his scout's one—three fingers of his right hand touching his forehead smartly, the thumb within his palm, covering the little finger, symbolic of the three parts of the Scout Oath, and the knot of honor that ties them together). As he made this reply he blushed guiltily, with a hasty glance down the path that led from the swimming hole.

"You are not nearly so good at bluffing as our friend Pepper," Dr. Welford smiled. "You are very good to that red headed scamp, Billy. You spoil him."

"But he's so awful nice," Billy defended loyally. "And he has promised me a bull pup."

"The regulations don't allow dogs on the reservations, Billy," Dr. Welford smiled again, "but maybe we can get special permission, as this isn't exactly a reservation." (Billy thought of the "Deputy Assistant Instructor in Military Etiquette," and giggled.) "As to Pepper being a nice chap," the officer continued, "I reckon I know that better than you. When he and I were school boys together at the old Episcopal High School, near Alexandria, he was over three years my junior, though he was up with me in my classes, and he made me do every thing he wished, somehow. He is the sweetest tempered boy I ever knew, and lots of fun along with it, and I believe that is the reason he makes every fellow he meets love him. Here he comes, now—tan shoes, leather leggins, olive drab riding breeches and shirt, and all. Even got his bronze U. Ss. on his collar, and his khaki uniform cap. Looks nice, and awfully fit, don't he, Billy?"

Of the two officers, Spot had, in reality, a far handsomer face, but nobody ever noticed it as they did the other man's—for Pepper was so boyishly exuberant and friendly, while Spot was usually grave.

"Breakfast not ready yet, Billy?" Pepper asked innocently, raising his voice for the benefit of old Dr. Iron, who was pacing an-

grily up and down the clearing. "That will never do, my boy! Hold still, child, hold still!" this last being added with sudden earnestness, very real now. "There's a mosquito eating your left shoulder. Hold still, I tell you, like a good boy, until I take a look at her and classify her."

"Reckon I know a skeeter is biting me, Dr. Sloan," Billy answered with some bitterness, trying to hold his body perfectly still. "How do you know she's a lady, though?"

"She wouldn't be eating you, if she weren't, my son." Pepper laughed, focusing a small reading glass on the boy's bare shoulder. "It's simply beautiful, Spot," to his brother officer. "I never gazed upon a fairer—not your shoulder, Billy, but her ladyship. She's an Anopheles all right. See how she stands on her head and waves her hind legs in the air, at about an angle of forty-five degrees from the boy's skin. Furthermore, she's a Quad—the Chief's pet name for *Anopheles quadrimaculatus*, Master Scout—because I can see the four spots on her wings (some of them have five by-the-way). I can see them just as plain as anything. She's a lovely object, Billy, and any Boy Scout should be proud to make a breakfast for her."

"Is she a malaria skeeter, doctor?" Billy asked, squirming a bit, for his skin began to itch and sting.

"Yes. All Anopheles carry malaria, but you needn't worry your head about that, old fellow, for the three grains of quinine that the Chief makes all of us take three times a day just now, will be pretty sure to keep you in fighting trim, I think."

"You know a lot about mosquitoes, don't you?" Billy said with frank admiration, after he had received permission to kill "her ladyship". This, he remembered, was Public Health, and a knowledge as vast as Pepper's would be sure to win that much coveted Merit Badge.

"Not nearly as much as I'd like to," the young officer smiled down at the boy. "But any fellow picks up a lot, working with the Chief. You can't help yourself. He explains every thing so nicely, the three kinds of malaria mosquitoes, for instance. Just like this, you know. Anopheles quadrimaculatis (like her ladyship) just now, with four or five spots on her wings. The Anopheles punctipennis the Chief calls them Puncs, by the way—with a sort of yellow 'bite' out of each wing, and the Anopheles crucians, with three spots on the sixth vein of their wings. You need a glass to distinguish the little beggars, except that all Anopheles stand on their heads like her ladyship, when they bite, and other mosquitoes sit parallel to the body."

"I'll never remember those names, you know," poor Billy sighed.

"Oh yes, you will. Use the Chief's pet names. Quads, four or five spots on their wings. Puncs, with a yellow bite out of each wing. Crucians, three spots on the sixth vein of their wings. And remember, *all malaria mosquitoes stand on their heads, with their hind legs in the air, when they bite a boy*. Really it's not hard, and it is something that every Boy Scout, particularly in the South, should know like a book."

A perfect bellow from under the oak, proceeding from the mouth of Senior Surgeon John Iron, a tall, fat old gentleman with white hair and an energetically bristling, close cropped mustache, stopped further talk. The afore-said bellow containing the information that it was "high time and over" for breakfast, and this opinion sent Billy scurrying for his kitchen, while the cheerful Pepper and the solemn Spot hastened toward the table, as did all the others that were at Camp Ross, six or eight of them.

"Don't wait for the Chief," sang out Mr. Hollis as he hurried over from his cabin, khaki clad but without the physician's insignia on his collar, nor the grade marks on his sleeves, and with a felt campaign hat instead of their smart, olive drab Service caps, with the tanned leather chin straps.

"And pray why not, Hollis?" in a ponderous, grunting voice from Dr. Iron.

"Just because he said not to, Iron," Mr. Hollis responded as he sat down. "Hope Billy has something good for breakfast. He seemed fearfully upset last night, Heaven and the tribe of small boys alone know why. I say, Neems, pass me the sugar and milk, like a good chap."

"Here you are, Hollis." Surgeon James Montgomery Neems replied—a stout, muscular man in his olive drab uniform, wearing his coat (or blouse as it is called) and with his cap on the back of his rather bald, red head, his eyes blinking behind very thick eye glasses: "Better than the evaporated cream we had at Ancon, eh Hollis?"

"There were worse things in Panama than evaporated cream, Jimmy Neems," Mr. Hollis replied darkly, putting sugar and cream in his cup, preparatory to the coffee that Billy, now at his elbow, poured into it.

"Oh tut, tut, Frank," Dr. Neems laughed shortly, as usual, missing the Engineer's point entirely; "You are always thinking of the row you had with the Alcalde at Colon."

Frank Hollis laughed good-naturedly enough.

"Meaning about 'the naked brown babies in Bolivar Street,' as 'Panama Patchwork' puts it?" he asked.

"The same, my boy, the same. Glad old Gilbert found poetry in them, for I'm blamed if I ever could, nor you either, Hollis, from the way you had 'em scrubbed. Speaking of those Bolivar Street babies, though, how did you and your school children up at Sago Branch come along, Pepper? I'd have given fifty dollars to have heard your maiden speech on mosquito sanitation."

"I'd have made it a hundred, myself." Mr. Hollis chimed in gleefully.

"And I'd have given one thousand dollars, yes sir, one thousand dollars not to have heard it," in strong tones from old Dr John Iron.

Pepper, otherwise Teddy, otherwise Assistant Surgeon Sloan, dropped his brown eyes to the table, while his smooth, freckled face turned a deep pink.

"D-did you hear it, sir?" he asked, as shy as a guilty small boy.

"Yes I did," the old gentleman flung back grumpily, and then he began to laugh: "It was too funny, Neems," he chuckled fatly, "Too funny for anything!"

"It wasn't any fun for me, sir." Pepper flushed, looking both young and sulky. "I—I guess I did the very best I could, though. The boys were all right enough, but the girls! Gee! —Look here, fellows, there—there were some big girls there, and—and they laughed 'most all the time, you know."

"I wonder why on earth they did that, Pepper?" Mr. Hollis asked gravely, and the whole officers' mess howled with joy.

"Oh, because—because they said my—my uniform was pretty," the youngest officer blushed, though he laughed at himself with the others.

"Sure that that was all the big girls said, Pepper?" Dr. Iron inquired with ponderous jocosity. "Seems to me you are leaving out the most touching part."

"Oh, but please don't!" from the wretchedly embarrassed Pepper.

"Yes, I will, though, Master Pepper. You see, gentlemen, these sunbonnetted young ladies on Sago Branch said they thought the uniform was pretty, but that the Service boy in it was prettier still—'cute'—was the exact word, wasn't it Pepper?"

"Oh, I don't know!" poor Pepper grinned sheepishly.

"Must have been uplifting from a scientific standpoint, Pepper." Dr. Neems struck in with gusto, while Mr. Hollis expressed the opinion that he had no doubt but that the children of Sago Branch were greatly edified.

"It was the best I knew how to give 'em, scientifically," the youngest officer defended stoutly. Then he began to laugh. "How would you feel if a bunch of girls were giggling at you, Dr. Neems? Looking at you, right in

your face, you know, all the time? It was the awfulest feeling."

"Oh, I'm used to girls looking at me, Pepper," Jimmy Neems replied, with such complacency that the mess roared again, more joyously than ever.

Gradually, however, the men one by one stopped laughing, those who commanded a view of the path leading from the swimming hole stopping first. Then they rose to their feet, rather embarrassed at the noise they had been making, and, clicking their heels together, saluted with sincere respect the advancing form of their "Chief", Assistant Surgeon General Ian Whitlock.

CHAPTER V

"And I called him a fool . . . oh how blind was I!
And the cup of my grief's abrim.
Will glory o' England ever die
So long as we've lads like him?
So long as we've fond and fearless fools,
Who, spurning fortune and fame,
Turn out with the rallying cry of their schools,
Just bent on playing the game."

ROBERT SERVICE.

"To me the straighter prison,
To me the heavier chain,
To me, Diego Valdez,
High Admiral of Spain."

RUDYARD KIPLING.

"Drake sailed these seas a yesterday,
Full of the rapture of new world joys.
Faith, we are in good company,
He, the Arch Saint of us Service boys."
From "THE SAGA OF AN UNSUNG SERVICE."

"BUSTER"

General Whitlock, after returning the salute of his officers, replaced his right hand on the broad shoulder of his companion, a fresh faced youngster of seventeen, with an engaging

smile and a lot of yellow hair swept smoothly off his forehead in what the General, his father, called his "plume". A year ago he had been center on his prep. school eleven. He was big and tall for his age, and had much of his great father's graciousness of manner, though, added to it was a shy boyishness that had a charm all its own.

Both man and boy were in the olive drab khaki of officers, though the General, like Dr. Neems, wore his blouse, with the Eagles on the collar to show his rank, while the boy, of course, was without any insignia.

Dr. Whitlock was a slight, athletic man, a little shorter than his school boy son, and thinner, with closely trimmed, iron gray hair above a tanned, clean shaven face, lean and very clever, and behind the tortoise-shell rims of his eyeglasses, with their long, black silk cord, looked out a pair of shrewd, though very kindly, gray eyes. In his tight fitting field uniform he looked quite youthful, in spite of his fifty-six years.

As to "Buster"—for, though his real name was Robert, the Assistant Surgeon General's son had never outgrown his small-boy name—he worshipped the ground the General trod on, and only once in all their lives had they ever had anything approaching a quarrel, and that had been in the June of 1916, a year before.

While with his father at the U. S. Marine

Hospital at Stapleton, on Staten Island, just after school had closed, Buster had gone with him to his club in New York, and there he met Richard Norton and his brother Elliot, the former in charge of the American Volunteer Motor-Ambulance Corps, on duty "somewhere in France", the latter in charge of the organization work in the States. These two charming, quiet men, had talked much with the General over their after dinner cigars, while Buster, wide eyed and strangely moved, had listened in silence to their simple accounts of the fine work of their corps in Europe, of wonderful duties in "No Man's Land," done with quiet steadiness, while the ambulances trembled in the shock of the German guns.

After they were back at the station, Buster asked his father to let him go over with Richard Norton for the summer, but the General naturally refused.

"But I'll be seventeen in August, Dad," the boy begged, "and I'm ever so strong, you know, and—and husky, and big and all that. Lots of the fellows think I'm eighteen. I know right much about a machine, too, and—"

But the General shook his head, though he gave Buster full credit for his fineness in wanting to "do his bit". Then the boy got stubborn, for the first time in his young life, and a little savage, too, and said he would go, if he had to run away. Whitlock senior, after days of care-

ful thought, decided that he would have to do one of two things; either lock his son up somewhere and guard him, with the chance always of his getting away, or let him go over for the summer in a proper way, sheltered with the General's own reputation, and under Richard Norton's sane control. He was worried and distressed, but he was proud of the boy, too, and at last he gave his consent, and as Buster passed his physical examination with flying colors, he sailed away at last, bound for the French port of Brest, to return in the last part of October, sun-browned, glad and modestly proud of the work he had done at the wheel of the American Pierce-Arrow, given to the corps by one of the American founders of the great war hospital at Neuilly, just outside of Paris. He also brought back the remains of a hole in the flat arch of his tough young stomach, now only a ragged scar, but which had invalidated him home, "Just in time for school, you know, Dad," as he explained with a rueful grin. He had not been entirely a well boy since.

With much glee he told his father, as pleased as himself, if not more so, of his having been one of the convoy that received the distinction of being "cité" before the Corps d'Armée—the equivalent to giving an individual the Croix de Guerre, with the glorious right to paint that much prized distinction on his car.

"And I used a paint brush for the first time in my life, Dad," the boy exulted, "and—well it looked right nice, a good deal like the Croix de Guerre, anyhow. I was the one kid in the crowd—lots of 'em in the trenches, of course, French boys, you know—so the rest said that if I didn't do the dirty work and paint that war cross, they'd paint me—and they'd have done it, too. Charley Penrose—he's a lean, leather-faced old chap from Baltimore—and Gee, Dad, his glasses are 'most an inch thick—he started to pull off my shirt, so I got busy, I can tell you. He's just the sort to paint a boy's skin for a lark. He was always ever so good to me, Dad. When I got that ball right in the pit of my stomach, and when I was so sick I was green, he carried me pick-a-back to the little old Ford (not crazy about 'em for ambulances, myself, none of us were) and was as good and gentle to me as you would have been, and rode with me all the way in to the nearest poste de secour, and got a Croix de Guerre for his very own. Gave me some of the dandiest Edam cheese, once. Gee, but it was good! We ate it with some soggy crackers, we and a brancardier, sitting on the smashed up wheel of a caisson, somewhere between Dead Man's Corner and Shell Street. That cheese was about the best thing I ever ate. Honest it was. It was splendid work, Dad, though I'll own up I used to get scared

sometimes, and those other fellows in our Convoy were just wonderful, and spunky! Oh, my! It was wonderful, specially old Charley. He, and a little poilu whom we called Toto, could find more good things in the way of eats than anybody else—and we never asked where they got 'em, either. 'Leave it to old Haws-khaw, Buster,' he would say to me, looking so solemn you'd never think he was joking, 'and he will detect food for your youthful tummy. Venez à moi, Watso,' that was his name for the poilu at such times (after the pictures in the funny paper, you know Dad). 'Buster wishes food. Oh, la! la! We it at once get. Not?' and he'd get it, too."

No wonder then, after all this, that Dr. Whitlock rejoiced at having his son with him, and when the youngster's health forced him to leave school in February, neither the father nor the son felt much regret at it, and Buster had seen too much of real suffering on the Verdun front not to know now how to be patient in his own pain, so that he improved very well when once back with the General in Washington, and both decided that, even in this summer's field work, they would stick close together.

No wonder, also, that Scout Billy Hoover should be in a constant state of exalted hero-worship, divided more or less equally between his great Chief, who had served the round

world over, and his yellow headed, pleasant son, who laughed and sky-larked with him, or with the younger officers, even when he was lying, rather pale, in a hammock—always jolly and full of healthy, boyish fun, and always good and kind and dependable, like the Chief himself.

CHAPTER VI

"Author:—Hey! hey! What the deuce is all this? Why, 'tis Ercles' vein, and it would require some one much more like Hercules, than I, to produce a story which would gush and glide, and never pause, and visit, and widen, and deepen, and all the rest on't. I should be chin deep in the grave, man, before I had done with my task; and in the mean while, all the quirks and quiddities which I might have devised for my reader's amusement, would lie rotting in my gizzard, like Sancho's suppressed witicism, when he was under his master's displeasure.—There was never a novel written on this plan while the world stood."

SIR WALTER SCOTT.

"And then he laughed his dear old laugh,
And winked his dear old wicked eye:
'It's just my joke, my fun, my chaff,
Boys *want* me bold and bad, not I! "
From "THE SAGA OF AN UNSUNG SERVICE."

THE FOLLY QUARTERS

The upper heading to this chapter reminds me, rather grimly, that I have strayed away a bit from my story—though I am not so sure about that, either, for I want you youngsters to know the stuff of which the Service is made—The boys manly, self-reliant, modest boys,

and the men manly, ever ready fellows, schooled in the hard life of much work (very, very great work from a humanitarian standpoint) small pay and smaller recognition. Like Kipling's account of "Her Majesty's Jollies", they are "soldier and sailor, too", on revenue cutters, sanitating military camps for our Government, doing surgery in the Marine Hospitals, lent to Russia in Cholera times at Libau, on duty in Yokahama, or Naples, ridding South America of its bondage to Yellow Fever, the Philippines of its Bubonic Plague, and giving up their home happiness (home is an almost unknown word in the Public Health Service) and often enough their lives, so that other men, in this and in distant countries, may live, and always modest and quiet about it all, with the true spirit that their Service inculcates.

And now, with your kind leave, we will return to the breakfast table at Camp Ross.

"Here is your chair waiting for you, General," was the ingratiating salutation of Dr. Neems, showing a finely shaded mixture of good-fellowship and ardent respect, which called forth a growling whisper from old Dr. Iron in which the only distinguishable words were "Humbug" and "Official toady".

"Glad of it, Neems," the Assistant Surgeon General smiled, seating himself opposite Dr. Iron, at the head of the table. "I'm hungry.

I've been up Bull Creek as far as Sago Branch, and I find any number of breeding places for Anopheles, and larvae a-plenty. I crossed the divide to the Folly Quarters, and Heavens and Earth! over on the Big Bear River, almost in front of that beautiful old house, a bit to the left, is a cistern of the most awful antiquity, of an age with the Gainsborough and Kneller portraits within, I guess, and packed with larvae and mosquitoes in every stage of development. Awful, wasn't it Buster?"

"And then some, Dad," in cheerful reply from the boy. "Honestly, Dr. Neems, I never saw such a lot of wiggle-tails in my life. And as Dad says, the eggs were ever so thick, worst bunch of larvae going, I bet."

"Buster bears me out, you see," the General laughed. Then to the boy, "Buster, sit down and have your breakfast. That stomach of yours must be woefully empty." And he laid one hand invitingly on the chair at his left.

"Not right now, Dad," Buster smiled back. "I'm going to lend our official Cookie a hand." And he raced off to the kitchen, a murmur of admiration, voiced by Dr. Jimmy Neems, following in his wake.

It was said in Service circles that Dr. Neems was in a constant fervor of admiration over every thing that his superior did, or said, or owned, and that the General's shoes, as well as the General's young son, were objects of his

groveling adoration—the cynical Pepper, speaking for the younger officers, giving the opinion that the shoes rather got the best of it, Dr. Neems having some ambitious thoughts of wearing them himself some bright day in the future.

“Yay, Billikin!” Buster called as he shot into the kitchen. “Dad wants some hot cakes. My, but they smell good! If we’d had you at Verdun we’d have voted you a Croix d’Honneur, and you could have sported the little red ribbon of the Legion in your button hole.”

“What would I have done with it now, then?” Billy grinned. “Undershirts don’t have button holes, Buster.”

“Right you are, my son,” Buster flung back laughingly, “So it’s just as well that you weren’t there. Now trot out those cakes to Dad, and I’ll fry some for myself.”

“Oh, Buster!” from the scout, “Don’t you worry about that. That’s my work. I’ll be back in a second and cook you up all the batter cakes you can eat.”

“Oh, get out, Billy Hoover!” Buster grinned widely, “I fried cakes before you were born. You’ve got a lot too much to do, anyhow. Dad was talking about it this morning. He wants you to quit this galley for the rest of to-day, and come over with Pepper Sloan and me to the Folly Quarters to see about draining a cis-

tern. You'll like that, won't you? We'll see Wardy."

"You just bet I will!" the scout answered with fervor, and dashed out of the door with a plate of cakes.

Left alone for a moment, Buster poured some of the smooth batter onto the griddle, and then sent his eyes over the table, where they promptly fell upon "The First Hundred Thousand."

"Hul-lo!" he exclaimed, as he picked the book up. "Haven't seen you for three months. Bet I remember two thirds of you, though. You're such a jolly old fellow, you know!" then, idly glancing at the first page, he read and a pleased, quick smile crossed his face, the statement in Billy's round, school-boy hand, to the effect that the book was "For Buster, to wish him many happy returns," etc.,

"Now that's mighty nice of the kid," he said; "and I mustn't let him know I've seen the book. He's the right sort, is our Cookie."

He shoved the book under a newspaper, and as he did so, Billy returned.

After breakfast, in spite of the scout's protestations to the contrary, Buster helped him to "wash up", and so, by the time that Pepper Sloan sauntered up, they were nearly ready for him, the only cause of delay being the couple of minutes it took Billy to slip into his scout shirt, after which the three set out up

a path by the creek, soon to cut across country for the Big Bear river and the Folly Quarters.

By the time they had climbed the divide between the two water sheds, they were all very hot, and the prospect of the cool shade at the Folly Quarters lent wings to their dusty feet, so that when they at last cut across a field of pink clover and came in sight of the house, Pepper let out a cheer.

It was a very lovely place, the Folly Quarters. The big Georgian house, with its bricks brought over from England before the Revolution, was at the edge of the sixteen-hundred acre plantation, the grounds sloping down to the river in a series of three terraces, at the bottom of which was a small boat-landing, set among willows, their pale green sprays just sweeping the brown, leaf be-speckled water. It was a three storied house, the upper floor being in "dormer" style, and the facings were of white marble, with slender, Ionic columns supporting the roof of the porch. Above the fan shaped glass over the double doors at the front, and on the very top of the house itself, were carved wooden pineapples, dating back to the quaint colonial symbol of welcome. To one side stretched meadow after meadow, and at the other side was the big, old fashioned flower garden, set among thick hedges of English boxwood, all closely clipped, as was the velvety grass of the yard. Young Warfield

Brown had not a lazy bone in his small, compact body, and in spite of his few years, he loved his home as only a southern plantation boy can, and he worked from half past four in the morning to sunset, so that it might look pretty.

As he was expecting their visit, he came down the wide, shallow steps to meet them, dressed in an old, carefully brushed Norfolk jacket of blue serge, the collar hidden by the wide, soft roll of the collar of his white sport shirt, thrown wide open in front over his breast. He also wore white duck knickers, his only pair, carefully laundered for the occasion by Mammy Lou, and his bare legs and feet were scrubbed aggressively clean, if somewhat brown and scratched.

He shook hands all round, a little flushed and breathless with the doctor, who rumbled his tow head like the big, good-natured boy he was, but Wardy spoke to him with a shy dignity that showed him at his very best. With Buster he was cordial and frankly admiring, while upon Billy he bestowed a most friendly grin. A very different boy from the dusty, dirt smudged youngster in overalls and an old felt hat, who had been at Camp Ross the afternoon before.

"Cousin Byrd is in the study, suh," he said to the doctor, referring to his guardian, "and he's not feeling very well, so he asked me to

invite you inside. You fellows want to come in, too, or will you wait for me out on the porch? I've got the cutest white rabbit over in the stables that you ever saw. His—his name's—Buster," and he blushed and grinned apologetically up at the Assistant Surgeon General's son.

The boys laughed, and decided to wait on the cool porch, so Warfield led the doctor through a great, oak paneled hallway, with a ceiling that went to the very top of the house, in a sort of rotunda, and containing a winding staircase of carved wood that was the most perfect thing of the sort that the young man had ever seen, through a doorway hung with curtains of faded green brocade, and into the study, a big room, the walls lined with books. The small paned windows were wide open, and a breeze from the river billowed the curtains of white muslin into the room, but in spite of that the interior was rather dark, so the doctor stood on the threshold, looking about him a little uncertainly, from the soft reflections in the polished floor, to the dim outline of a most delightful oil portrait, life size. It was of a young boy, tow headed and plump like Warfield, and dressed as a French Pierrot, in baggy, pajama-like clothes of white linen, with red spots all over them, and three huge red buttons down the front of the jacket. He had a stiff, close fitting Elizabethan ruff about

his short neck, and a black skull cap on the back of his head, quite rakishly over the left ear, too. The very mischievousness of the rather tanned face was an almost exact reproduction of his young host.

A low, jolly little chuckle from Warfield made the man look up.

"Here's Cousin Byrd, suh," he said, leading the doctor forward.

Seated before a great, flat topped table, of very old rosewood, in a deep leather armchair, was a tall, very thin old man, with such an evil, waxey hued face, clean shaven, harsh, and most awfully clever that Pepper promptly wished himself any where but at the Folly Quarters. But when the old gentleman spoke, there was another surprise, for his voice was soft, and cultured and very lovely.

"Cousin Byrd," Warfield said, raising his voice just a little, and looking straight at the old man, "This is Dr. Sloan, one of the officers from over at Camp Ross, you know, suh. Dr. Sloan, this is my guardian, Mr. Byrd Ravenelle."

Gathering the folds of a handsome, quilted dressing gown of dark blue silk about his lean figure, the old gentleman rose to his feet, and held out one hand.

"I am so very glad to meet you, doctor," he said graciously. "You must touch my hand first, for I am quite blind."

"Oh, I'm so sorry!" Pepper blurted out, very boyishly, and the next moment he could have bitten off his own tongue, for the remark made him feel woefully young.

"That is a kind, pleasant thing for you to say, doctor," Byrd Ravenelle said in his lovely old voice, and with a smile that sent cold chills down young Pepper's tough back. "I appreciate it because, well, because your voice showed me that you really were sorry, my boy. You must forgive me but you are just a boy to me, almost as much of a boy as my dear Warfield. Come closer to me, Wardy—that is my pet name for him, doctor—and let me see you with my hands."

His body held very straight, his abdomen rising and falling, boy-like, in quick little pants, and with a slight flush on his face, not as if he were embarrassed, but scared, Warfield walked at once to the old man's side, and the doctor noticed a slight shiver pass over the sturdy body as Mr. Ravenelle's small hands passed over the bare chest and throat, and at last rested against the youngster's cheek.

Warfield noticed the quick lift of Pepper's eyebrows, a trick that youthful officer had when surprised, and he at once lifted one of his own work toughened hands and laid it gently over his guardian's, his skin rather pinker than before.

"He is a good boy, doctor," Mr. Ravenelle

said with his crooked smile, "and we love each other like father and son. We only have each other to love, eh Wardy?"

"Yes, suh," in a low voice from the boy. "I—I left General Whitlock's son and—and another boy, outside, Cousin Byrd. May I go out and play—I mean, may I go out to them?"

"Certainly, my dear," from the old gentleman, and Pepper noticed at once the relief on the boy's face as he trotted from the room. His whoop once outside in the yard, was as jolly as a boy's could be. Then the two men sat down, and the doctor explained about the cistern.

"Why, of course it must be attended to, doctor," was the prompt response. "It is a favor to let us know of such things, for with our lack of your technical knowledge, we might pass them over. One of my, I should say one of Warfield's, tenants, is supposed to attend to such things, but he is an idle, worthless creature, is Henry Bode. We are to be rid of him very shortly, however, very shortly indeed. If my poor boy's estate was not incumbered, I would gladly spend any amount of money on its proper sanitation. We are a rough, crude people, down here, my dear doctor, but indeed we mean well by our fellow men, I assure you."

He looked and spoke so smoothly and suavely as he said this, that the discomforted

Pepper greatly doubted his roughness and crudity.

So they talked on for awhile, but as the old gentleman, though always courteous, seemed to be very tired, the young officer rose to go.

"I nearly forgot to tell you, Mr. Ravenelle," he said suddenly, "that the Chief, General Whitlock, I mean, asked me particularly to tell you that he would have come to see you in person about this sanitary business, only he had to go to Washington, under telegraphic orders, this morning. He also said to tell you that he should be glad to have one of the orderlies at Camp Ross stop by for your outgoing mail each day, if you wished. He doesn't like to use the Dolittle postoffice, since that robbery, so we got a wire from the Postmaster General this morning, in reply to one he sent last night, authorizing us to open a post office of our own at the camp." and, with a rather shy laugh, "I'm postmaster."

"Now that is awfully kind of the General," Mr. Ravenelle smiled, at once producing fresh chills all over the body of poor Pepper, "and I appreciate it immensely, particularly from a man like General Whitlock. Still I have noticed that those great men, the really great ones, always think of the smallest details. Since you mention it, I must tell you that I accept the offer gladly, for, just between ourselves, (pardon a sick old fellow's confidence)

I feel very strongly about this robbery at Dottle. I—well, to be quite frank, there was a small mortgage on this place, that is small to anyone but Wardy and me, and I sent the money to clear it, to Senator Cubb. I have the receipt, for I sent it in ten one hundred dollar bills, registered, instead of by check, and the letter was among those that were stolen, in the Washington bag.

"Oh, that's awfully tough, sir," Pepper began earnestly, but the old gentleman laughed softly.

"You are delightful, doctor," he said smoothly, "as fresh as a nice boy like you should be. But I assure you, my dear fellow, it might be worse, it really might. If Warfield and I had been dealing with a hard man, things would be different, but Jonas Cubb is as soft hearted as he is fat, a really dear old fellow, and he wired back in answer to my telegram to him at Washington, that we must not worry, for he would not think of foreclosing until we had given the federal authorities ample time to catch the thief. You see, therefore, that I have good reason to be glad to accept the General's offer. Poor little Warfield is a pugnacious urchin, and he was in a great rage about it all last night. I quieted him after a while, though I could not blame him for being distressed, for the money was really his, as is the whole extent of the Folly Quarters."

"Well, I bet they catch that thief, sir," Pepper cried truculently.

"I do not doubt it, I cannot allow myself to doubt it, you see," Mr. Ravenelle answered, gazing steadily at the young fellow out of his sightless eyes. 'Good-bye, my dear doctor. I hope you and any of the other officers at Camp Ross, will make the Folly Quarters a sort of bachelors' hall while you are in South Carolina. You will be always most welcome, I assure you," and sinking back in his deep seated chair he waved one small hand pleasantly at the doctor, smiling his crooked smile.

Just as he was leaving the room, repressing a desire to run, Pepper was startled by a faint, malignantly evil chuckle, but it couldn't have been from the old gentleman, for he was lying back in his chair, his eyes closed.

"That—that was me you heard laugh," came the voice of young Warfield at his elbow. "I—I do that sort of thing sometimes, you see. Cousin Byrd, he—he is just always getting after me about giggling when I ought not to, but I—maybe I can't help it. That—that was me you heard laugh, doctor. H-hon-est!" and he scratched his tow head nervously, a scared, worried look on his round, healthy young face.

CHAPTER VII

"When the Tower o' Babel had mixed up
men's *bat*,
Some clever civilian was managing that!—
Not one of the Royal Engineers,
Her Majesty's Royal Engineers,
With the rank and pay of a Sapper."

RUDYARD KIPLING.

"And I wish I was back on my cutter again,
I would give all a full surgeon's wealth—
To be killing mosquitoes, or out on the main,
With the 'Live Ones' that do Public Health!"
From "THE SAGA OF AN UNSUNG SERVICE."

WHICH IS ALL ABOUT WORK

"If a hungry ant, in search of a breakfast, should come across the brains of some of the sanitary Engineers of the Service that I happen to know, he would pass them by as a morsel unworthy of his notice, and would go industriously in quest of the dried hind leg of an Anopheles."

Thus speaks our freckled friend, Pepper Sloan, as he glares over the clearing at Camp Ross.

It is a couple of weeks later, and July is well advanced, and Camp Ross has been thrown,

quite suddenly, into a state of consternation and confusion, energetic, bewildering and very thorough. A deep ditch is being dug for drainage, to empty the little pools that stand in some low ground near-by, marked by Mr. Hollis as a breeding place for the festive malaria mosquito, and nobody seems able to cross it. People are constantly falling into it and, once in, they seem at some difficulty in getting out. There is much mud, much sarcasm, and a little swearing.

A very dirty young man, who in brighter times is a sanitary "dipper"—that is he goes about after the Assistant Surgeon General, dipping up mosquito larvae in a tin receptacle,—but now busy with a pick-axe, scowls upon another man, armed with a long handled shovel, and inquires what sort of a blithering, double-barrelled fool survey Hollis expects to carry out now. The man with the shovel, speaking from the bottom of the ditch, gives it as his opinion that "somebody higher up" had better try digging in this blamed clay, and just see how his hands feel. He exhibits certain blisters on his own hands, and the sight of them makes him very, very angry. Then a big, curly haired young man, very muddy as to shoes and leggings, and much excited, comes up to them, waving his arms, and informs them both that what he says goes, and furthermore,

that if anybody wishes to know who is bossing this job, they had better just start something.

The lively Pepper now takes a hand, and pours a quantity of metaphorical oil on the fire, by remarking very clearly that if he falls into that silly ditch once more, he will be only too glad to comply with the curly-head's request, and will start something "right". His smooth jaw squares very perceptibly as he says it, too. Then Buster and Dr. Jimmy Neems appear on the scene, their hands deep in their pockets, and laugh immensely at the others, which quite maddens them, after which the two aforesaid return to the cabin that is known as the Executive Building, deep on some work of their own. Much sarcasm, of a biting nature, is now tossed from both sides of the ditch, the man with the shovel, and he of the pick, at once allying themselves, soul and body, to the young engineer. Finally Pepper, more pugnacious than ever since their desertion to the other side, voices his remark about the hungry ant, whereupon the curly one advances upon him—and tumbles into the ditch. This at once puts every one else in the best humor possible, and Pepper helps him out quite magnanimously.

"I say, Lake," he says with a grin, "Here's a letter for you. See? Mr. Lake W. White, just as plain!"

The letter is from a young lady in Boston,

dear to the heart of the sanitary engineer since his days at the "Tech", so it is received with enthusiasm, and the recipient becomes very gracious.

"Thanks, Mr. Postmaster," he says, blushing a little. "This is great. Fifth one in six days. I—" but he stops short, for Mr. Hollis is sighted swinging over the clearing in khaki shirt and riding breeches, a pipe in the corner of his mouth, and humming dolefully:

"'Oh, the Isthmus, oh, the Isthmus, /
How we love its sunny clime!
M'laria and Yellow Fever,
Skeeter oil—sulphate quinine.'"

He is quite cheerful, his song to the contrary, and he doesn't fall into the ditch, which is felt to be a personal affront to every one else.

"That's not deep enough, White," he says briskly. Then, to Pepper, "Where's Billy?"

"He's entertaining a guest, sir," Pepper replied.

"Wardy, eh? Good! Chief back from Miami yet?"

"Yes, he is," from Pepper, still eyeing the ditch wistfully. "He's in the kitchen, too. Spot's on his way back to Nakokok, to address a farmers' meeting on malaria prevention; Fred and Joe are out in the jungle, Dr. Iron is in Dolittle; Dr. Neems and Buster are in the

office, working over some dictation for a report to the Bureau on this Bull Creek work; Lake White has been in that ditch, but you can see him for yourself now; Grant and Charlie are working before our eyes there; Uncle Pete is driving old Ironsides; Archie Kemp and Smith are talking sanitation in Charleston and Bluits Falls, respectively; and I'm here."

"A good, thorough report, Master Pepper," Mr. Hollis laughed. "Think I'll step over to the regions of Cookie and see what is going on." And he walked briskly away.

At the door of the kitchen he stopped, for the Chief was talking, and he did not want to interrupt either him or the two eager-faced boys that were listening.

"It is all sorts of a pity, Billy," he was saying, "that those Boy Scouts of yours should have run off to the Virginia mountains. They could have been doing such splendid work right here at home. No fuss about it—I hate fuss—it's not a part of the Service—but good, big, man's size work for every mother's son of them, if they had stayed here to do it. Why, the Surgeon General of the Army, Gorgas, you know, told me that the English scouts were the right hand of the Government in sanitation, when he was in South Africa, and Howard told me, speaking of Langford's work at San Antonio in nineteen-four, that the youngsters in San Antonio did wonders. I

saw a lot of it myself, too, in that part of Texas. It was really splendidly inspiring work. They had aquariums in all the schools, with eggs and wrigglers, so the pupils could watch them develop into mosquitoes, with the help of large magnifying glasses. There was all sorts of rivalry among the boys in the matter of finding and reporting to the Health officers the biggest number of breeding places found and destroyed. There would be a Public Health merit badge as well worth the earning, Billy, as was the Croix de Guerre on Buster's motor-ambulance."

"Did those kids really help, though, when it came to a show down?" the scout asked doubtfully.

"I should say they did! The first year the death rate, which had been from fifty to sixty cases a year from malaria troubles, was reduced seventy-five percent, and in the second year there was not one death due to malaria in San Antonio."

"But those kids would have scuttled off like bunnies, if there'd been any real scary stuff 'round, like the Yellow Fever you told us about in Havana and on the Isthmus! I just bet you they would," Wardy struck in, with all the moodiness of his rather doubting young nature.

"You are wrong there, old man," the Assistant Surgeon General laughed, looking down at the towseled tow head good-naturedly,

"There was an epidemic of Yellow Fever in the part of Texas near the Mexican border—I had charge of it, so I ought to know—back in nineteen-three, and the ways and looks, and the whole pathology of the *Stegomyia facia*, as the *Aedes calopus*, or the mosquito that conveys Yellow Fever, was then called, were burning questions among all the school boys of San Antonio, just as Buster tells me First Aid is with the lads of Paris now-a-days. As to this war we're at last in, thank heavens! I firmly believe that if the Boy Scouts will only stay at home and help the United States Public Health Service, and their own State Boards of Health, to clean up the country so that our Army training camps can be on a thoroughly sanitary basis, they will be doing as much to help lick Germany as the men in our sister services are doing on land and sea. Those Virginia scouts, mostly from Richmond, I believe, are of course doing an excellent thing by going to Accomac and Northampton Counties, and helping the farmers gather in their enormous potato crop, but if you fellows will take my advice and learn what *Anopheles* look like, and all about the destruction of the breeding places of these malaria conveyors, you will be doing your bit in the war as well as the best. Remember, old man, that it is the *field work*, *field work*, *field work* that counts in malaria sanitation, and that the applied knowledge of

what you read in books is the only real use, and you Boy Scouts can do as much as anybody in its application. If I were a Boy Scout commissioner, I would preach "stay at home and help there" until I dropped, or until you poor youngsters did."

"But we've planned this big hike for a whole year, Chief," Billy explained, a bit crest-fallen. "Our troop never has been anywhere to have adventures, and—and we felt we'd be just sure to have lots of them if we could only get far enough from home."

The Assistant Surgeon General smiled broadly.

"That so, Billy? Well, have they had many? Have you heard from any of them?"

"Oh, yes sir. I got a letter this morning from my chum, Tod West. Like to see it?"

"Certainly I would, if I may read it out loud to Wardy, too. May I?"

"Why, sure," from Billy; so the General took the letter and read as follows:

"Dear Billy:

I am having a right nice time of it up here, but I miss you a lot. Wish you were along. I have caught a good many fish, perch I guess, and a turtle. We've got a good swimming hole. We did a lot of flag, wig-wag practice yesterday, and it was awful hot. No scraps so far, but some rough house at nights.

Your chum,
T.

"Huh!" rather ungraciously from Warfield Brown; "I don't see much adventure in that, Billy Hoover! Caught some fish, and don't know whether they are perch or not, as if any boy couldn't tell those flat little beggars, and rough-housed some at night. Gee, but that's a great life! Why, you and me catch fish every other day in the Big Bear, and they're bass, too, and I bet we know it all right enough! and I bet two boys just couldn't rough-house more than we do when we're in the swimming hole." Then, beginning to chuckle, "I say, Chief, I ducked Pepper—I mean Dr. Sloan—three times yesterday."

"Good for you, Wardy!" spoke out Mr. Hollis, as he now entered, " 'Morning, Chief, glad to see you back! Good trip, eh?"

"No, it was not, Hollis," the Chief responded. "It was abominably hot in Miami, and we had an off shore breeze that brought out every mosquito for miles around, to say nothing of sand flies, and when I got to Tallahassee, (had to run over there for Cuthbert's report) the heat among those red clay hills was fearful. It rained a bit, too, one of those nice, sticky, semi-tropical down-pours like New Orleans. It was worse than Dry Tortugas, and I sighed for the cooling trade winds on the Caribbean side of the Isthmus. Met Senator Cubb in Tallahassee, by the way, down there on business with a member of the House. He expects to be up

this way in a day or two. His grandson, a handsome, sulky-faced young cub of fifteen, was with him. It is plain that the old fellow adores him, and spoils him disgustingly. The lad's parents are both dead, though, so I guess there is a good deal of excuse on the Senator's side, and he is a dear old fellow himself, and a good friend of the Service, too."

"The Lord preserve us, man!" in a dismayed groan from the tall engineer.

"I say so, too!" Wardy flung out, his temper, never of the best, much ruffled. "Cousin Byrd got a letter from him, the Senator, you know, last night. He's going to stay with us."

"Oh, he will be at the Folly Quarters, will he, Wardy?" Mr. Hollis asked with a sigh of relief, "that is too good to be true. Our guardian angel is still with us, Chief."

"Oh, I'm ready for both of them," Wardy grunted. "Let 'em come, 'specially that Van, the kid's name is Van Lear Cubb, Cousin Byrd told me."

The sweet-tempered scout misunderstood him.

"Yes, I know you are all ready for them, Wardy," he said. "Mammy Lou told Uncle Pete that she and you had fixed up two awful nice rooms for them."

"Did she tell you which two?" young Warfield inquired darkly.

"Why no, she didn't," Billy replied simply.

"Well," with grimness, "the Senator's room isn't so bad, only eight Browns and three Ravenelles have died in that bed, but Van's room is a hummer! It's had twenty-two deaths in it, and one suicide, and one murder. Honest it has. Gee! I wouldn't want to curl up in that old four-poster my own self. No suh! There's a real, sure-nough ghost in there too, the guy that was murdered. That's a portrait of him in the study, by Sir Joshua Reynolds, and they say it looks a lot like me. I ain't a bit crazy about it, myself. He was just awful, and Cousin Byrd says I've got some of his temper. Reckon I have, too, 'cause I'm just always getting mad. He beat a slave to death, or something dreadful like that, and then another slave smashed in his tow head, that's just like mine, too, and so he goes round in that old room at night, screeching like time, laying for anybody that hasn't got any more sense than to sleep in his blamed old four-poster."

"You don't believe one half of that, you young scamp." The Assistant Surgeon General laughed.

Wardy grinned.

"Well—I don't know," he said impishly. "Hope Van Cubb will believe it, anyway. So long, Billy Scout, I've got to trot back to the Folly Quarters. Cousin Byrd will give me Billy Blue Hill if I'm late for dinner. Good-bye, General. Good-bye Mr. Hollis."

"So long, Wardy," from the scout. "Say, Buster told me to tell you he was ever so tickled with that ham you sent him for his birthday party. We're going to celebrate on the first week in August, instead of waiting to the twenty-fifth when he'll really be eighteen, 'cause we don't know where any of us may be by that time. Us Service fellows change around so"—this last with some pride.

"But look here, Billy," the Assistant Surgeon General interrupted, "I thought I bought a ham for Buster's party, some weeks ago."

"Oh, great day!" in a wail from Warfield. "He—he did buy a ham, from the Folly Quarters, too, but he (I'd like to punch your head for you, Billy Hoover!) he—well—I gave Buster one, too. Aw, Gee, I've got to go, and—and, Good-bye everybody." And he dashed out, bestowing a sulky scowl on the round-faced scout. At the door he collided sharply with the incoming Pepper, dodged under his arm, and then disappeared.

The three men and the boy gazed after his sturdy, indignant small figure, and then at each other, in surprise. Finally Pepper spoke, scratching his red head thoughtfully, his cap pushed over his left ear.

"Why, he's a regular young man-eater, when he gets mad," he grinned, carefully pulling off one legging and examining a good sized bruise on his shin. Then, replacing the legging and

strapping it, he handed the Chief a letter, saluted, and strolled out, humming cheerfully a most pathetic ditty, containing a request for exact information as to the whereabouts of "The Boys of the old Brigade, so sturdy, so staunch and so true," after which, being once more in the open, he proceeded to fall again into the ditch.

CHAPTER VIII.

"A bow-shot from her bower-eaves,
He rode between the barley-sheaves
The sun came dazzling through the leaves,
And flamed upon the brazen greaves,
Of bold Sir Lancelot.
A redcross knight forever kneeled
To a lady in his shield,
That sparkled on the yellow field,
Beside remote Shalot."

ALFRED TENNYSON.

"Fisher boy, your bait be throwing,
Drowsy swells about you flowing,
Swift your sturdy arms their rowing,
Draw you, lifting, t'ward the bar."

From "THE SAGA OF AN UNSUNG SERVICE."

THE LONE SCOUT

Two days later, having seen nothing of Wardy since his pugnacious departure from Camp Ross, Billy Hoover decided to look him up. After he had finished his work with the noon-day dinner dishes, he went into his own cabin, took out from among his carefully folded duffle the small compact roll of khaki-covered fishing tackle that every good scout should

have, and, after examining it, to see that all the joints of the light steel rod were in place, and that his spin-reel, both on catch-lock and relief, worked smoothly, he strapped it shut again and fastened it to the pommel of his saddle; for the Assistant Surgeon General had lent him his own horse, Toby, to ride over to the Folly Quarters.

Billy was in the best of humors, for not only was this the afternoon that he and Wardy usually appointed for fishing, but he was beginning to feel really satisfied with his knowledge of malarial transmission, thanks to his kindly Chief. With pardonable pride, the scout realized that he was no longer content to classify a biting mosquito, standing on its head, with its hind legs waving in the air, as a member of the Anopheles family, but that he must make sure, by the four or five spots on its wings if it was a "Quad", or, seeing the yellow "bite" in its wings, to put it down promptly as a "Punc"; or (which was harder for him) to count the spots on the sixth vein of an Anopheles crucians. He was in dead earnest on the subject, for it meant that much coveted merit badge in Public Health, one of the two remaining stepping-stones toward a Life Scout, so, before mounting Toby, he filled the older of his two canteens with kerosene (fresh water was already in the other one) and settling the cord of his scout hat on the back of his yellow

head, he rode away, taking a bridle path toward the Folly Quarters.

On arriving at the fine old plantation house, he was met by Mammy Lou, trouble clearly showing on her round, kindly black face, and, to his utter horror, she at once conducted him into the study.

Poor Billy fidgetted unhappily, turning his scout hat round and round by its broad brim, or playing nervously with the white tape lanyard of his Patrol Leader's whistle. How gladly would he have put it to his mouth and sounded the three short blasts, followed by a long one, that means "Patrol Leaders come here," if only his assistant in the Patrol, Tod West, had been near enough to respond! The room was quite empty, save for the heavy old furniture, the books, and the funny, smiling face of the black-capped, tow-headed Pierrot by the great Sir Joshua, the life-sized boy seeming almost to step out of the dull gold of the frame, ready to give a jolly, "Yay, Billy," in Wardy's own voice.

"Who'd ever think you had such a temper, old scout!" Billy smiled, still a little nervous, and speaking aloud. "You're just full of fun—when you don't go and get mad!"

"He has a dreadful temper, my dear," came the lovely old voice of Mr. Byrd Ravenelle, whereupon the scout jumped and looked about him uncertainly.

Then he saw Warfield's guardian, again in the blue silk dressing-gown, standing by a door, let directly into the oak panneling of the room.

"Good afternoon, Billy," the old gentleman said, with his crooked smile, his tall figure appearing more gaunt than usual; "I am so glad to see you, my dear boy. That uniform is charming. I do wish that my darling Wardy was a Boy Scout like you."

"Wish he was too, sir," Billy answered, most horribly ill at ease.

"I am sure you do, my boy, I am quite sure you do," Mr. Ravenelle assented. "It is such a delicious thing for a lad to be—speak the truth, do a good turn daily, and so forth. Charming, quite!"

Drawing a deep breath, Billy plunged into his mission, explaining that this was the day he and Warfield usually went fishing, dividing the catch between Camp Ross and the Folly Quarters.

"Well, I am most terribly sorry, you know," Mr. Ravenelle said with soft urbanity, "but Wardy cannot go with you this afternoon. Poor Wardy! He has a headache and is in bed at this very moment."

"Why, I never knew he was sick in his life," the scout blurted out. "He looks as husky as anything. I'm awful sorry he's sick, sir. May I—may I go up and see him?"

"Oh dear me, no," from Mr. Ravenelle, with his widest, most hair-raising smile, "Wardy is much too wretched to see anyone, except myself. It is so good of you to want to cheer him, however, most brotherly and—oh, dear me, so like a Boy Scout! I adore Boy Scouts, they are so—so subtle!" and he laughed for about the only time the scout could ever remember.

"Yes sir," he said shyly. "I'm just awful sorry Wardy is sick. And I'll leave part of my catch, if it's a good one, as I go back to camp."

"And that makes another good turn to your daily account, my dear Billy." Mr. Ravenelle smiled. "Oh, dear me, dear me, why isn't my poor, little Warfield a Boy Scout?" and in quite a transport of admiration apparently, he gently pushed Billy Hoover from the room and out of doors, the scout being only too glad to get into the warm sunshine.

Remounting his horse, a well built chestnut cob, he trotted out of the grassy yard and followed the low bank of the Big Bear, stoutly whistling "under all circumstances," as even a much harrassed scout should do.

At a certain point, where the river narrowed, he swung himself out of the saddle, and tied Toby to the low limb of a live-oak, whose gray beard of Spanish moss helped to sweep off the lazy flies. Then, untying his roll of fishing tackle, and slinging both canteens across his

tough body by their wide canvas straps, he walked briskly along the bank, determined to do his bit of sanitation before he fished, and remembering a tiny pond of back water that he and Wardy had found on their last trip, and that was quite full of mosquito larvae and wrigglers, or "wiggle tails," as the boys preferred to call them.

He found the bit of marshy ground with very little trouble, for he had blazed a tree or two, making his small notches low down, by way of a trail, and had carved an arrow, with a box at the feathered end, to show the near presence of water—though he had his own doubts as to the goodness of it. Removing the metal cap of his old canteen he made a cup out of one of his hands—the folding cup that hung from one of his belt hooks was respected as a conveyor of drinking water—and began to throw oil over the still pond, first toward the center, some five feet away, and then up close to the shore, watching the smooth film that formed with satisfaction, knowing very well that, when the wrigglers rose to the surface for air, the oily blanket would smother them. As he was attending to this work very earnestly, crouched at the edge of the little pond on his haunches, a low, good-natured laugh made him look over his shoulder quickly, to find the brown-headed Gopher Bean near him, resting lazily against a willow.

"You all beat anything in creation," this young gentleman remarked, smiling down at the squatting scout. "Bet you're lookin' fo' skeeter aiges. Say, how do they taste? Any good?"

Billy grinned.

"We don't eat them," he explained. "We just try to destroy them, so you folks 'round here won't have any more malaria."

"Shoo!" the Gopher chuckled, "thet so? My, ain't that nice of you, though!"

Billy flushed, but he kept his temper the best he could.

"Well, I don't know how nice we are," he said stoutly enough, "but I reckon we do the best we can—all the Service do that, you know. If these eggs hatched, they'd all be wiggle-tails, and then mosquitoes, and as they are all malaria carriers 'round here, they'd make you mighty sick sooner or later. That's honest, Gopher."

"Well," from the Gopher, responding quickly to the scout's good-natured friendliness. "That's all right, I reckon. I'll tell you somethin', though, Scout. Ef you tote a hoss-chestnut in yo' pants, you won't never have no fever. Not never. Granny Wilks tol' me that. She's the Wise Woman up on Sago. It's a fac', too."

"Is that straight?" Billy asked politely, though he didn't at all believe it. "She must

be all sorts of a wise old lady, I should think. Ain't she, Gopher?"

"She sho' is wise. She charmed Jim Bode's warts away, an' she cured my black eye fo' me in jest no time, after Wardy Brown got through with me. He's the all-firedest, toughest, funniest li'l cuss when he gets mad—which is jest 'bout three times a day, I bet—thet I jest can't do nothin' but laugh at him. That's how he licks me."

"He gave you a black eye, did he?" the scout asked, laughing in spite of himself, for Warfield was much smaller than the easy-going Gopher.

"'Cose he did, Scout," Gopher Bean grinned. "Et were after that time we stol' yo' ham."

Billy Hoover sprang to his feet, his body very straight, his fists doubled up.

"You mean to tell me that Wardy Brown ever stole anything?" he glared. "You've got all sorts of a nerve! I won't stand for anybody calling Wardy a thief, so shut up. If he wasn't sick in bed just now, he'd lick you himself."

"He ain't in no baid, Scout," the Gopher flung back quietly, though he stood his ground. "He was jest a-hidin' from you. There ain't a mite o' use fo' you ter git mad at me. I—why I—I," a dull blush spreading over his tanned skin, "I like you right now, when you're wantin' to fight me, better'n any boy I know.

You're so blamed straight, an'—an' sorter clean, an' sech a good-tempered, tough young hustler! Blamed ef you ain't, Scout. Over at Henery Bode's we talk 'bout you a heap. But honest Injun, me an' Wardy Brown stol' that ole ham. Jest like we stol' et from ole Habakuk Meers sto' the night befo' General Whitlock bote et. We've made a heap o' money offen thet ole ham. Stol' et, an' sole et, nigh on twenty-one times, twenty anyhow. Et cost fo' bucks, you know, an we made two hundred apiece—Wardy allays divided up real honorable. Et helped him to raise the money to pay off thet thousand dollar mortgage on the Folly Quarters, to Senator Cubb. I got mine still, 'cause—'cause I thought the kid mought need et, someday."

"Well—I'll-be-hanged!" the scout flushed, feeling as ashamed as if he had himself done something disgraceful. "That's just awful! It's tough!" and he scratched his crisp yellow head in distress. "Are—are you still stealing stuff, Gopher?"

"No indeedy we ain't," very emphatically from the Gopher. "We're too skairt, both of us. You see ef this ever gits out, everybody will be a-hollerin' an a-bawlin' thet we all stol' the Washington mail bag, because et were on the same night we busted into ole Habakuk's sto', but honest, Scout, we never tetched the blamed thing. We never took no money, nor

nothin' like that, Wardy an' me, jest the ole ham. Now we're plum skairt to death."

"Yep," very crisply from the Boy Scout, looking squarely at the disconsolate Gopher, "I bet you are scared. Why the dickens did you want to go and tell me about it? Hully Gee, man! I—I sure wish you hadn't. I don't know what to do. I wish you'd never told me a thing."

"Well, I don't. I been a-wantin' ter tell you fo' a long time, 'cause I knew you wouldn't tell nobody else, but Wardy, he said I mustn't, thet you'd jest naturally hate him fo' ever ef you knew. You see, Scout, Wardy planned to give everybody back their fo' bucks—he'd kep' a list of et all—jest as soon as he'd paid off the mortgage, from the money he'd git from some timber on the land. He jest couldn't tetch no timber, you see, long as the place had a mortgage on et. But now the money's gone in thet ole mail bag, and—well, we're plum skairt to death. I can't look no hog in the face now-a-days. So 'long, Scout, you ain't a-goin' ter tell nobody, are you? I jest had ter tell somebody, 'cause we been so skairt."

"N-no, I won't tell on either of you, Gopher," the scout sighed, his dark eyes troubled. "Poor, old Wardy! Poor, old Wardy! He's just a kid, and—I say, Gopher," his round face brightening, "if we could only catch the guy that stole the mail bag, and if we could make

him hand over the money, out of that registered letter, everybody would just know you two hadn't robbed the post office. And say," very gently, and feeling most awfully clumsy, "if we did do all that, would you be willing to give back the two hundred dollars you—you took, if Wardy gave back his—and—and own up to the thing you—you did? I say, would' you do that, Gopher? I know it would be awful spunky, but if ever they do start a troop here (and the Chief wants Pepper Sloan to do it) it would show that you had the right stuff in you for a Boy Scout. I've done some pretty tough things my ownself, Gopher—n-not just like that, of course, but—but I'm a Boy Scout, and a Patrol Leader, and I'm not such an awful bad scout. We fellows aren't one bit different from other boys, only, well—we do try to be straight, and we ain't scared to own up when we are bad; or if we are scared, we own up anyhow. Gee, I bet I'm making an awful mess of what I want to say, but it's sort of tough on a fellow to explain things, and to live up to his oath, too, when he's a Lone Scout, like I am now-a-days. The rest of the patrol buck a boy up, some how. You'd make a first rate Patrol Leader, Gopher, so would good old Wardy, if—if you'll just pay back, if you can, and own up. I—I don't know, I doubt if any fourteen-year-old would know, though heaps of them have more sense than me, but I think

Wardy was all wrong about doing something dirty and then making it up when things came his way. It—it don't sound square to me, and I don't believe it's right. But, Gopher, if dear, old Pepper Sloan does start a troupe of scouts, you're the very kid to be at the head of your eight, and a Patrol Leader just has to be straight, so won't you please help us to trail that mail thief, and then tell. Better wait till then to say something, I reckon, but—but be ready to own up any time—right now if you had to. The Chief has written to Mr. Livingstone, he's the President of the Scouts, in Washington, though of course Woodrow Wilson is the official Commander-in-Chief, and I reckon Pepper will get his commission as a Scout Master any day, so we've all got to get out of this mess, you and Wardy and me, just as soon as we can. If you'll let me, I'll talk to the Chief about it all, and he won't tell anybody he shouldn't, Gopher, and I reckon I'll just have to talk to Wardy, too, but, Gee! I'd rather take a licking any day. You'll let me tell the Chief, won't you, old Scout, and you'll own up when your time comes, won't you?" and he placed one dirty brown hand with a firm affection on the other youngster's bowed shoulder, the old, friendly grin on his mouth.

"I'll own up, honest injun I'll own up, Scout!" the Gopher said brokenly. "I jest can't do nothin' less Wardy owns up too,

though, 'cause I won't tell on him, any more'n he'd tell on me. You said a while ago that you done bad things—why, boy, you ain't done no sech a thing, yo' heart's jest as clean as yo' body. You're good, an' you're all sorts of a man, too, even ef you are only a kid. Gosh, I thought you was a sissy once! Wish every kid 'round heah, was half as good as you, Lone Scout! I'll own up jest whenever you say, ef Wardy's willin' o'cose, an' you can tell yo' Chief jest what you please. I jest know et'll be all right. So 'long!" And he disappeared noiselessly among the undergrowth, leaving a deeply worried Boy Scout, scratching his yellow head thoughtfully, but with his young jaw squared with a big hearted purpose, sturdily bent on doing as a Boy Scout should.

CHAPTER IX.

"Just for a handful of silver he left us;
Just for a riband to stick in his coat—
Found the one gift of which fortune bereft us,
Lost all the others she lets us devote.
They, with the gold to give, doled him out silver,
So much was theirs, who so little allowed.
How all our copper had gone for his service!
Rags—were they purple, his heart had been proud!"
ROBERT BROWNING.

"So much impress these Coast Guards free,
(They greatly love to bandy boys!)
And let those 'Jackies' know that we,
We Service chaps, are handy boys."
From "THE SAGA OF AN UNSUNG SERVICE."

TWO YOUNG CUB(B)S

After Billy, his catch divided into two strings, had returned to camp, having left one bunch of fish at the Folly Quarters, he went straight to his Chief and told him, very honestly, all that he and the Gopher had said. General Whitlock was thoroughly pleased at the stand the boy had taken, and told him so, and, with a quickness that was a part of his trained mind, he at once grasped the situation

from more angles than the puzzled scout had believed could exist, for he was famous, was the Assistant Surgeon General, as the most thorough detail man in the Service.

Pepper, who had received his Scout Master's commission that same afternoon, was also consulted, and the outcome of this official high court was the finding that all agreed that Billy, much to his relief, had best leave the aforesaid details to his elders, the cheerful Pepper taking it upon himself to interview Wardy and "bring the poor little tow-head to his senses, for he'll be one of my Boy Scouts, you know, Chief." It was further decided by this same court, the Chief acting as Judge Advocate General, that Billy should make another trip to the Folly Quarters just as soon as a proper opening presented itself, so that Wardy could be given a fair chance to tell him in a straightforward way, boy to boy, about his unhappy escapade, should the Gopher have already consulted him about his own wish to "own up." If Wardy said nothing, then the matter was to be left in Scout Master Pepper's energetic young hands. They let no one else into their secret, not even Buster, for the Chief objected to worrying the boy, still half sick from his old shrapnel wound, unless he could be of very definite use.

An excellent excuse for a visit to the Folly Quarters presented itself some three or four days later, when Pepper burst into the kitchen

where the Cookie was industriously shelling peas.

"Can you make a cherry pie, Billy Boy, Billy Boy,
Can you making a cherry pie, charming Billy?"

the exuberant young officer sang out, his eyebrows arched very high with excitement.

"Sure," from the always practical scout.
"You want one?"

Pepper burst out laughing, and, grabbing the youngster, waltzed about with him several times.

"Aw, quit—please!" Billy giggled, ducking out of the Assistant Surgeon's grasp. "What's it all about, anyway? What you want a cherry pie for, doctor? It's lots too late for them down here, you know—but maybe we've got some canned ones."

Then Pepper seated himself on the edge of the kitchen table and explained that he had been speaking in metaphor, and that all he wanted was to tell Billy that he must have a very good supper ready for the next night, as the Chief was going to invite the Hon. Joshua Cubb and his grandson over to 'tiffin' with the officers, and he wanted his mess to 'do itself proud.'

"And he's written the invite, my cream-puff, and here it is, and

'So I laugh and blush, Mamma,
And that's the reason why.' "

Pepper quoted gaily. Now's your imperial chance to see Wardy—doggone it, for two pins I'd kiss you, Billy—you're such a good little scout! Don't worry, you're too muscular to be my fairy princess, though you may prove to be one, or at least a fairy godmother, to our tow-headed friend."

Behold, then, First Class Scout Billy Hoover, with his best olive drab shirt, a new white and black Patrol handkerchief knotted about the open V over his breast, his tan shoes carefully cleaned (I defy anyone to polish a real scout shoe!) and with his gilt insignia, double Patrol Leader bars of green felt, and merit badges displayed on his sturdy person, standing in the shade of the avenue of great live oaks leading up from the side of the Folly Quarters, in a wide sweep, to the river front of the house, his brown felt hat set very exactly on his head, its cord carefully adjusted over the back of his yellow hair. He was quite well contented with his appearance, for he looked trim and natty, and—though he did not know this last—very manly, too.

Master Warfield Brown, in a brand-new pair of white duck knickers, a white sport shirt, thrown deeply open from his brown throat, his legs encased in stockings, his feet in white

sneakers, suddenly appeared on the front steps and waved to him, really very glad to see him, it seemed, for he raced down the steps and up to him and proceeded to punch him in the stomach, a sure sign that he was in a most comradly spirit.

"Yay, Billy!" he grinned.

"Yay, Wardy!" from the scout. "How you feeling?"

"Fine." Then his tanned skin grew deeply pink. "I'm all right now, I mean." Then, becoming excited, he added the following strange remark, as they sauntered toward the house together. "If fellows just let me alone," he said darkly, "I'm the easiest boy to get along with you ever saw, but if a kid tries to get fresh and begins to butt in on my business—why, I'm pretty sure to get mad, and start something."

The Boy Scout felt at once that all was not well with his tow-headed friend, that the "Entente Cordiale" between them was apt to be all too brief.

"Who's been making you mad, and troubling you, old scout?" he asked in the most placative manner he could assume, thoroughly expecting an explosion. Wardy's reply brought instant relief, however.

"Why, you know Gopher Bean, don't you?" he asked pleasantly. "Well, he and me had

a—a sort of a secret, and—and he wants to tell.”

“That so, Wardy?” Billy asked mildly, a most disagreeable little perspiration springing out all over his tough body, and not daring to look at his short friend.

“Yep. But don’t let’s talk about it. It makes me too mad. Say, Billy, I sure am glad to see you. That’s straight.”

“Well, you don’t ever come over to Camp Ross any more, so I just have to come here to see you,” Billy flung back good-naturedly. “By-the-way, I got a letter here for Senator Cubb. It’s for you and your guardian too, sort of. The Chief wants the lot of you to come over for tiffin tomorrow night at seven o’clock. We’re going to have all sorts of good things for eats, so you better come, Wardy. Oh yes, and Buster said to tell you that if you didn’t come he’d ride over here on Toby and spank you.”

“Oh, I’ll come all right, if Cousin Byrd says I may,” Wardy cried happily, his face brightening all over. “I love it at Camp Ross. It’s lots more fun than here at the Folly Quarters. The Chief asked Van, too, didn’t he Billy?”

“Of course he did. Say, Wardy, what sort of a boy is Van Lear Cubb? As tough as you thought?”

“Tough?” in quick admiration. “He’s not one bit tough. He’s great! He’s got an allow-

ance of a hundred and fifty dollars a month! and a pony, and a motor boat and even a Pathfinder runabout of his own. What you know about that, Billy Scout! He's going to give me a shotgun, too. A Remington, sixteen—and I've only known him for two days and a piece. He's just ever so nice, Billy—and rich! Great day!" Billy Hoover opened his eyes very wide and looked at Warfield squarely.

"He must be nice, to want to give you that gun," he said steadily, "but I don't see why his being rich has anything to do with it."

"But it has a lot to do with it," Wardy flushed, resenting Billy's tone. "Why, we're going to be partners, Van and me, and have the Folly Quarters between us some day. He says he can get me another thousand dollars easy, and I bet he can, too."

"You must be crazy in the head, Wardy Brown!" the scout blurted out, very nearly losing his temper. "Two kids can't play around with a thousand dollars, just like it was a white guinea-pig; and that's all there is about it," and in his troubled heart he at once saw that Wardy was determined to say nothing about his late badness, since he would depend on Van Lear to clear the mortgage, and to settle things with the Senator.

"Say, Wardy," he continued evenly, his dark eyes narrowing a bit, "is that Remington six-

teen to help pay for the Folly Quarters, for Van's share, I mean?"

Wardy's attitude at once became truculent in the extreme and his browned skin flushed deeply, while the scout stepped quickly back a pace or two, his own fists doubled up, but a boyish voice near at hand interrupted what might have been a fight.

"What's the row, Wardy? Need any help? Oh, look who's here? A little Boy Scout! Gee, those bare knees look funny. Say, kid, why don't you pull down your pants or pull up your stockings, one or t'other? Your name's Gwendolyn, isn't it, kid?"

"My name's Billy Hoover, if you want to know," the scout blazed, swinging around on the new comer, mad to the heart of him. "I'll punch it into your head, if you like."

"Aw, shut up, Billy," Warfield cried suddenly, as he stepped resolutely between them. "Let him alone. He's just teasing you some. This is Senator Cubb's son, Van Lear," with an emphasis that went straight to the scout's big, tender young heart, "he's the best friend I've got. Van, this is Billy Hoover, one of the Service boys over at Camp Ross. Aw, go on, you two. Shake hands. Please."

Billy, greatly hurt as to his feelings, and still pretty mad, complied none too graciously, while the other boy, a dark, handsome, sulky faced lad of fifteen, took his hand carelessly,

with a slight shrug of his broad shoulders that made the scout most eager to slap his face for him. The two scowled at each other in the way boys of a certain age have when very mad, so poor Warfield felt that he must say something and say it quickly.

"Van," he began, with his most engaging grin, "General Whitlock has asked all of us over to Camp Ross for supper to-morrow night. It'll be no end of fun, honest it will. Eating out of doors, with a big old camp fire, and all that, and Billy is a swell cook, he—"

"Is that so?" Van cut in with a short laugh. "I thought so. He's the cook, is he? Well, that's just like a Boy Scout. The Nation's servants, I call them. Say, you've got a nice bunch of friends, I must say, Wardy! A farm hand, and an officer's servant, I—"

"Aw, Gee, Van!" from the horrified Wardy, but Billy, pushing him aside, promptly took a hand himself.

"Look here," he said steadily, flushing with righteous anger, "the sooner you shut up with that sort of talk, the better. I don't want to fuss with you, but you've been trying to start something ever since you showed up. If you want to fight, it's all right, you know, but I haven't done a thing to you, and you've talked as tough as you could to me. I tell you right now, I won't stand for any more of it; so if you want to fight, say so."

Van made no reply whatever, but he slapped the scout squarely across his face, and Billy, every muscle at once hard and running smoothly in his firm body, sprang at him, knocked him down and plumped down on top of him on his knees, after which they began to roll and tumble about on the ground, for Van, though not so skillful, was bigger and a little stronger.

"You get right off him! Hit him, Van! You get right off my brother!"

An excited whirlwind, in the shape of a small, red-headed boy, with a pink and white face rather freckled as to the bridge of the snubbed nose, here suddenly rushed upon the other three youngsters, his white Norfolk suit flashing in the sun, like the most pugnacious of the members of the famous Table Round of Arthurian legends, his fists doubled up. He was only twelve, and short and slight for his age, and he looked not unlike a small, very plucky bantam as he hurled himself at once upon the astonished Scout, throwing one muscular arm about his neck in a strangle hold, that proved him to have some knowledge of wrestling.

"Oh, please, you two quit," came the imploring voice of Wardy at the same moment, and as Billy did not want to hit the small boy, and as, at the same time he felt his flat stomach rising and falling in the quick pants of a deep

breathing boy, he scrambled to his feet, and Van did the same.

"Why can't you ever mind your own business, you little runt?" Van growled. "Go on back to the house, or I'll spank you right before these other kids, see if I don't. Now, trot!" and the pugnacious small knight of the white duck Norfolk suit, who had had plenty of spunk to tackle a boy at least thirty pounds heavier than himself, and much taller into the bargain, wiped his dusty hands on his baggy knickers, looked at Van for just a moment out of his brown eyes, just now as big and round as coffee cups, and then turned very quickly and ran toward the house, stumbling a little, now and then, for his small shoulders were bowed with grief, and his face was buried deep in the up-lifted crook of one of his arms, big tears tumbling down his freckled nose.

"Who's he, Wardy?" the scout demanded, as he dusted his uniform, sulkily enough.

"Oh, that's just Don Cameron," Wardy answered quickly. "Van's half brother, you know. I—I'm awful sorry you two got mad with each other. Maybe you'll like each other lots better after awhile. You—you going right back to camp, Billy? Aw, Gee!"

"You bet I am," the scout flung back. "And—and—and," then, getting a hold on his temper, he continued with more of his usual, sweet tempered friendliness, "and say, Wardy, I

hope you'll come over to-morrow, and be sure to bring that red-headed kid, with the turned up nose."

"You mean Don Cameron? He's not invited, is he?"

"That's just who I do mean. Don's a gentleman, and spunky! Gee! He's just all right, Don is, and I'm going to ask the Chief to invite him specially, you see if I don't. So 'long, Wardy. See you to-morrow," and the scout trotted off, not even looking at Van Lear Cubb.

"Not that I can see, unless for the fact that you might have tried to give Wardy an easier opening to own up. Still, the chances are that he wouldn't have taken it, for the whole trouble is that he is just scared to death—in a regular man's size panic about his adventures as a house breaker, and he thinks that he has found a solution to all his troubles in making friends with this rich boy. Poor little kid! I think he'll find himself neck deep in trouble if he gives Van Lear Cubb the upper hand so much."

"You're right, Buster," the scout assented. "Wardy's scared, he's so rattled that he doesn't know what to do—just like a bunny with a lot of beagles after him. He don't know which way to go. By-the-way, I've got to ride over to his place right now, for your father."

An hour later he had ridden up to the Folly Quarters with a note written on the official stationery, the seal and insignia of the U. S. Public Health Service (an anchor and chain, crossed with a winged Mercury staff) in the upper left hand corner, the whole being addressed to Donald Cameron. It was written in the Assistant Surgeon General's own hand, a pleasant, cordial little note, apologizing gracefully for not having included him in yesterday's invitation, and asking the boy, as an especial favor, to be the great sanitarian's guest that evening.

"Gee whiz!" the enraptured Don cried, after

reading the note, "He—he treats me just like I was a grown-up."

"Will you come, Don?" the scout smiled down from his saddle. He had refused to dismount.

"You just bet I will," in fervid response. "Ought I to write an answer? I hate like anything to write notes, 'cause my letters are so awful fat, you know."

"He said I needn't wait for an answer," Billy laughed, "so if you'll say you'll come, I reckon that will be all right. Mind, the whole officers' mess will be mad if you don't show up, Don," and he galloped off, most uncomfortably aware of a pair of sullen, but deeply longing, blue-gray eyes set in a touseled tow-head, that gazed at him from behind one of the oaks.

"Well, it's all in Pepper's hands now, thank goodness," the scout sighed as he galloped along, "so I needn't worry a bit," but he did worry all the same. "I'll do just what Buster says, though. I'll try to have all the fun I can to-night, for after Pepper talks to Wardy, I bet it will be all up with our friendship."

Following this resolve, he flung himself into the other boys' sports that afternoon with more than his usual energy, that this, their last play time together, should be their very jolliest, but he went through his part rather mechanically, and was really glad when, at six o'clock,

he had to leave them and go into his kitchen to see about supper.

The three boys had ridden over from the Folly Quarters at four o'clock, in Van's Pathfinder, but the Senator and the blind Mr. Ravelle were not due until six-thirty, so the guests were left to the mercies of Buster.

That young gentleman was particularly radiant and agreeable, but in an offhand, impersonal way that rather hurt Warfield's feelings, since he had bragged a good deal to Van of his intimacy with this good looking lad from the Verdun front.

"I say, Buster," he said at last, with a shy little grin, "your namesake over at the Folly Quarters is doing fine. You ought to come over and see him."

"That so, Wardy?" Buster laughed easily. "Glad to know it, but I think 'most any other name would have suited that bunny better. How about it, Van?"

"I don't see it that way," the Senator's grandson replied warmly. "Any boy would want to name his favorite pet after a fellow that's seen real service on the other side, like you have. I know I would."

"Oh, I haven't done anything, man," Buster flushed, a bit disconcerted by Van's frank admiration. "That's straight. I just happened to play in luck and get with the crowd in our Convoy which was the first to win a Croix de

Guerre for themselves. The other men, the grown-ups, did most of the work, Van." Then he promptly changed the subject, as was his quiet way when anyone tried to talk with him about his own bravery. "Let's start the camp fire," he suggested. "It's ever so jolly to have one, particularly when the mists begin to creep up like now."

"Bet you had some great camp fires over in France!" young Van Lear cried reverently, his dark face glowing with all a boy's hero worship, his eyes big and entirely without their usually pert expression as they watched every change in the tall Buster's face, very earnestly.

"Like fun we did," Buster laughed back, as he began to lay his fire carefully, "our camp fires were usually little, half grown things behind the wheel of a motor-ambulance, with three or four of us squatting 'round it making tea, and scared silly all the time for fear Fritz would see our smoke and get the range on us. I'm not nearly so good at this fire stunt as our friendly scout over there in the kitchen. Wish he could come out and show you chaps how to light a fire, the way he does, Indian fashion, with a leather thonged wooden bow, a bit of soap stone and friction, instead of using matches like I do. Gee, I'm clumsy! If only I'd known that scout stunt when we were outside Verdun, I'd have been a sure-'nough hero, for one time Grandpère Joffre inspected our

Convoy, and Mr. Norton gave him a cigar, and blamed if there was a dry match in the lot of us so he could light it. It rained all the time the good old Field Marshall was with us. Now, if I had been a Boy Scout myself, like Billy, I'd have been just ten times more handy with the trench boys, and heaps more efficient in my own corps, too. There was one little poilu, a Parisian, who had been a Boy Scout, and he was pretty near as much use 'round camp as Billy Hoover would have been, though he didn't know as much general scoutcraft. Wardy can tell you even better than I, how much Billy knows about the woods, for they have often been out together practicing wig-wagging and whistle signals. They used to tramp around here a lot, among 'the silent places,' didn't you Wardy?"

"Uh huh!" young Warfield grunted, his head a little bowed.

"Lost your tongue, Don?" Buster demanded cheerfully, quite satisfied that his praise of Billy Hoover had sunken deep in Wardy's heart, and so turning the talk to the youngest of the boys. "You haven't opened your mouth for twenty minutes."

"But I've had lots of fun listening, you know," Don answered with a shy glance, an echo of his browned-skinned half-brother's worship.

Buster blushed slightly.

"You and your big brother like to hear about the war, don't you?" he smiled.

"You bet we do," Van cut in, "and it's the wonderfulest thing that's ever happened to either of us, ain't it, Don?" some of Buster's persistent kindness to the small boy reflected in his own voice, "to hear about things from a boy that's been doing his bit."

"You must have had such great times in France," from Don. "I wish I could go over there. I've read about a bugler boy in a book Grandpa has, called 'Mr. Brittling Sees It Through,' and he was just a young kid. He used to swipe fish from a private pond that belonged to an English M. P., while his company were billeted at 'Matchings Easy', where Mr. Brittling lived. And say, he had freckles and a turned-up nose, too. Honest he did, 'cause the book says so."

Buster burst out laughing.

"Why, I tell you what you do, Don," he advised. "Join the Boy Scouts. If you are going to be over with Wardy at the Folly Quarters for long, join our troop. Pepper Sloan, he's an assistant surgeon on Dad's staff, has been commissioned scout-master, and we're all mighty keen over it, for Dad thinks that the boys around here, properly organized, can help the Service ever so. Then you can be sure to do your bit for the war right here. You see, when I went to Europe, Don, the States

had not entered the war. If they had been in it then, I'd have most certainly gone with my own colors. Now that I'm invalided at home here, I just can't go. You be a Boy Scout, old fellow, and it will be the bulliest sort of an Army training. They are the stuff of which true soldiers and sailors are made; Lord Kitchenier said so in the first year of the war, in an address down in Derbyshire, after a review of the 'Notts and Derbys', as we used to call His Majesty's Nottingham and Derbyshire Rifles."

"You think a heap of the Boy Scouts, don't you Buster?" Van Lear said, his brown skin flushing so that his few freckles disappeared in the blush.

"Sure I do. Don't you?"

"No I don't!" the Senator's grandson cried, a rather piteous break in his voice. "I know a troop in my state, near one of Granddad's summer plantations, and—and I hate the lot of them."

"Why on earth do you hate them, Van?" Buster asked, amazed at the other lad's serious, greatly hurt manner. "Aren't they square? Don't they play fair, or—"

"How do I know how square they are in their games," from the much tanned Van, his eyes wide and sulky, "they never play with me. Not a one of 'em," and his eyes dropped suddenly to the ground. "Course I don't care

whether they come around to play or not," he added, but rather wistfully at that.

"Well, if you knew more Boy Scouts you'd like the breed as much as I do," Buster said firmly.

"Saying a good word for the Scouts, are you Buster?" came the pleasant voice of the Assistant Surgeon General, as he walked briskly up, with Pepper at his heels, buttoning his uniform blouse as he came. "Glad to hear it. They are a fine lot, if our own Cookie is an example. Need them particularly in these times of war. This troop that Dr. Sloan is going to organize will be of help to all the Services, for I have to start to-morrow to make surveys all through the south for sanitating our naval stations and our training camps for the army, too. It's a big piece of work, and the Service will need the help of every boy that they can lay hands on, and a wide awake, trustworthy bit of Young America like Billy will be worth his weight in gold to us, for he is partially trained already. Yes sir, we need the scouts. 'Maxima reverentia debetur pueris.' eh, friend Pepper? Van, you'll be a taller, huskier fellow some day than either your Grandfather or myself, for, by the look of them, those white knickers of yours are hiding about as sturdy and straight a pair of legs as I ever saw in a fifteen-year-old. Don, my party, as Buster calls it, would have been a dismal

failure without your august presence, and I thank you a lot for coming. Buster, your 'plume' is much awry. Trot over to our cabin and brush your hair. Observe the olive drab splendor of Pepper and myself, combining elegance with activity! Been polishing these leather leggins of mine ever since we got back from field work," and he laughed as he quickly walked away, to welcome the Senator, who was just stepping out of his big touring car.

He was a short, fat old fellow, was the Senator, with a lot of wavy white hair under his soft gray felt hat, and he was as jolly as he was plump.

"Hel-lo, General!" he cried heartily, as he waddled toward the lean, clever-faced officer who advanced to meet him with one hand outstretched. "This is delightful. Beats Tallahassee to a standstill, don't it now?"

"My dear man," the Chief smiled back smoothly, "It is always good to entertain angels, unawares or otherwise. Personally, I have always thought it would have been far more delightful had our Biblical friends known the angelic character of their guests beforehand. What have you done with Mr. Ravenelle?"

"Oh, he couldn't come, Whitlock," the old gentleman chuckled, "and between ourselves, I'm not exactly broken hearted over his absence. He is the human personification of an

eel. His ward is a dear little fellow, though, with that tow head of his. He and my dear Van hit it off from the start. Van has already worried me out of sixty dollars to get Warfield a 'Remington—something', the young scamp! Isn't he a handsome fellow, General? Even his freckles are attractive, I think. Sort of funny and jolly in that tanned skin of his! Buster as stunning as ever? Shame to waste a complexion like that yellow headed youngster's of yours on a boy. A girl ought to have had it, sir. I knew Van would like him, but I wasn't so sure about Warfield's reception. Luckily, he told Van, some way or other that he'd never had a real present in his life, poor little chap, and that went right to my boy's heart. Hence the Remington what-do-you-call-it, and the request for my sixty dollars. Always after the old man's pocket book, bless his heart."

"That so? Must be a delightful boy!" rather dryly from the Assistant Surgeon General, settling his cap on his iron gray head. "And Warfield is willing to take such a costly present, is he?"

"Why shouldn't he be willing, Whitlock? Van has plenty of money, and Warfield has none, so there you are. Why, those young monkeys want to go into partnership with the plantation! Funny, for Van hasn't got many boy friends. Good blood in Wardy, you see,

and Van appreciates it. Boys around my country place are a common lot, not fit for his associates. Boy Scouts and all that sort of tummy-tum. Very well for a certain class, I reckon. Think of a partnership between a fourteen and a fifteen-year old. Droll, isn't it?"

"Quite," with particular suavity from the Assistant Surgeon General, as he led the way to the supper table, at which his staff officers were already standing, while Billy's cornet rang out the staccato notes of the mess call.

After the introductions were over, everybody more or less helped themselves, standing or sitting just as they choose, for the Chief, with the kindly courtesy that was a part of him, had insisted that the scout should not serve them, when the other boys were on hand, but that they should have a sort of English buffet meal, so that Billy would be free, once the food had been placed on the table, and, even in this, the Assistant Surgeon General and his brother officers helped, much jocosity being caused by the discovery on the part of Surgeon James Montgomery Neems that the artless Pepper had dishonest intents upon the breasts of some cold fried chicken, so that he consumed them rapidly behind doors instead of placing them on the table. Old Dr. Iron, also, performed prodigies of skill and dexterity in the way of balancing cold veal pies, several at a time. The officers did their work with

great gusto, any appearance of boisterousness being quite eradicated by the suave graciousness and easy courtesy that the Chief's manner contained as he tossed remarks to the Senator, humorous and otherwise, always with the utmost urbanity and with the undercurrent of a dignity that nothing known on earth could ever undermine.

"You fellows can serve yourselves," the Assistant Surgeon General called to Mr. Hollis and his engineers, as he served out chicken salad. "I've only one real guest to-night. We have both grown gray in the service, eh, Senator? So you are one of us. Don is my social lion this evening. Here, Don, try this, and tell me if the cuisine of this green-roofed hostelry isn't quite as good as you and your Grandfather find it at the Ritz?" and he handed the enraptured Don a plate piled so high with salad that the youngster's brown eyes fairly danced.

After supper, they all sat about lazily, some in the rough, homemade deck chairs of canvas, but more on the grass about the fire, watching the bubbling of the resin as it oozed and sputtered from the pine boughs. Buster, sitting crossed legged, his back resting against the comfortably curled-up Wardy, began to tune a samisen that he and his father had picked up some years before when the latter was on duty at Yokahama, and cuddling his softly

pink cheek against its long neck he swept his fingers quite expertly over the strings above the box-like square head.

"Somebody sing something. Please!"

"Ohè, ye sportive Geisha!" came the prompt response of Pepper Sloan. "If you want a real treat, I'll sing you Jolly Boating Weather, with the slight assistance of the alto soloist from the Cathedral of the Incarnation, Charleston. Oh, yes, I'll let you sing this once, Billy Scout," then, beginning to beat loudly on the trunk of a tree with his riding crop to attract the attention of everybody, he added cheerfully, "of course you must all join in, whether you know it or not! Ready, Billy?" and on the crisp reply of "Shoot!" from the scout, they both tilted their heads close together and began, the boy's contralto, low and smooth and creamy, singing in thirds below Pepper's light baritone, while the rest, taking the young officer's advice, gradually added their voices in the old Eton boating song. Suddenly above the rest, a full octave higher, there swept up the gusty shout of a boy's soprano, powerful and robust, but cultivated to the last degree of sweetness:

"Twenty years hence, fair weather,
May tempt us from office stools.
We may be slow on the feather,
And seem to the boys old fools—

But we'll still swing together,
And swear by the best of schools—
Swing, swing together,
And swear by the best of schools."

"Great day! Who did that?" the amazed Pepper demanded ecstatically. "It's just about the loveliest boy's voice I ever heard."

"Oh, that's just Don," Van Lear answered, looking up in surprise. "He's soloist at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, in New York, you know. Say, kid, don't make such a racket."

"Racket!" Pepper growled. "You call that a racket? Why, I bet the choristers up in heaven can't do any better. How about it, Billy?"

"We never had a voice like that at our Cathedral," the scout said at once. "Sing something by yourself, Don. You're a wonder."

"Sort of a musical cookie, huh?" Van grunted.

"For two pins I'd slap that brown freckled face, you know!" young Pepper muttered to his neighbor and chum, Spotteswood Welford.

"For why, Pepper? You better behave yourself."

"Oh, I'll be a good boy, old son. Only, he looks on our scout like—" and he hummed softly:

"He, humble, poor and lowly born,
The meanest in the port division.

The butt of epuletted scorn,
The mark of quarter deck derision."

It makes me so jolly sick, you know, Spot. Say, Don, do sing us something, as Billy says. Chief, you ask him to sing."

"Oh, he'll sing if I tell him," Van Lear struck in surlily. "Sing, kid!" and Don at once cocked his red head on one side, chorister boy fashion, and began, Buster catching up with him almost at once on the samisen:

"By yon bonnie banks, and by yon bonnie braes,
Where the sun shines bright on Loch Lomond,
Where me and my true love spent mony happy days,
On the bonnie, bonnie banks o' Loch Lomond."

and almost unconsciously, the deep throated chorus of the men's voices sung out the old refrain:

"O ye'll tak' the high road,
An' I'll tak' the low road,
An' I'll be in Scotland before ye:
But trouble it is there,
An' mony hairts are sair,
On the bonnie, bonnie banks o' Loch Lomond."

The childish soprano that had so often filled the vastness of the great northern Cathedral, now rang out in golden clarity among the green tapestried beauty of God's silent places, carry-

ing the rest along in a glorious sweep of sound—Boy, only, but a very, very great artist.

"There the wild flowers spring, and the wee birdies sing
And in sunshine the waters are sleepin',
But the broken hairt it kens nae second spring,
Though resigned we may be while we're greetin' "

Through the silence that followed, Buster's voice broke suddenly, high and full of a deep hurt:

"Oh, Dad—if I hadn't been shot and could go back to the other side! I'm ever so strong and husky, and—Oh, Dad, I want to go back so!"

"Yes, I know, old man," the Assistant Surgeon General said at once, as he stepped over to his son's side and laid one hand on his bowed head, "I understand."

"It's—it's that song, you know, sir. I heard the Black Watch sing it, miles and miles and miles of them, swinging along the road south, and—oh Dad, I want to go back so, I want to go back!"

"Yes, you told me about hearing that old song," the General said quietly. "It was just before you got hurt, wasn't it?"

"Yes sir. It was a regular nightmare, that night. The Germans had been sending a lot of lacrymose shells over the French lines all the afternoon, and some of the men's gas hel-

mets didn't work right, so we chaps in the Section Sanitaire Automobile Americaine, No. 7, had our hands full. Four of us, Charlie, Hollinsworth, McKay and I, were squatting over a little fire, trying to boil some water for tea, and I remember I'd had my first bath for ten days, and felt just 'in the pink' as Tommy Atkins says. Then we got word from Mr. Norton to bring our car (it was the only one not in service) into Verdun. We'd been working all the afternoon, 'most, with those gassed fellows, and that's the worst sort of work for a Red Cross man, and I'd made nine trips back and forth between the trenches and the nearest 'poste de secour.' The blamed machine had skidded and had two wheels in a ditch, for I'd scooted as hard as I knew how on the last trip, thanks to the lively Boches over the way, having got the range on Red Pepper Alley, but the four of us got her out onto the road somehow, and off we sailed, in high. We passed the Black Watch well behind the French lines, singing their Loch Lomond, and we cheered them like we were crazy. Think we were, sort of."

"Wish you'd tell us all about it, my dear boy," the Senator cried, eagerly as a boy, but Buster blushed and shook his head.

"There's really nothing to tell, sir," he said shyly. "I don't remember much, I'm afraid. I know after a while, I had hold of the back

end of a field stretcher, with Hollinsworth in front, and a French poilu, just a kid, on it, when one of those light-you-up star shells burst right over us, and then the shrapnel opened like fun. Hollinsworth was an old fellow, from Anne Arbor, I think, a professor at the University of Michigan.

"Feel a bit funny, Buster?" he called to me as he grabbed his end of the stretcher poles.

"I'm scared, if you want to know," I yelled back, for the guns were making the worst sort of a row. "Evidently you're going to run, aren't you sir?" for he was already doubling over the rough field at a trot, with me doing my best to follow.

"Run?" he grunted without looking back. "Run did you say, Buster? Why, boy, we're going to fly!" and we did, too, until poor old Hollinsworth came down with a tear through his thigh: "Take that poilu on your back, you young husky," he gasped, spitting blood as he spoke.

I looked at the French kid, but he wasn't in nearly as bad shape as Hollinsworth, so I made him as comfortable as I could, then I knelt down by Hollinsworth and gave him the best first aid I knew how with the help of my small field kit, and he says I cried all the time, though I'm blamed if I remember it. I managed to get him on my back somehow—used your fireman's hold, Billy—and started in

with him, and we made it, too, with the old boy cussin' me all the way for not leaving him and taking the Frenchy first. When I'd left him with Dr. Lhoste, I beat it back for my poilu, but I never got to him, for the next thing I remember is looking up at a fat old Fritz who tapped me on the head with his rifle barrel as soon as he saw my eyes open, so that I went to sleep again real quick. The next time I got conscious, I can tell you I just peeped a little, and there was Fritz with another Dutchy, looking at me awful hard.

"He looks like one of those English swine!" he said.

"Then I'll just drop my butt down on his pretty face," Hans, that was the other chap's name, grunted. I didn't know what to do, 'cept to say my prayers, so I said 'em to myself. Then I thought of something, so I began to mumble the greatest lot of junk you ever heard, "Czestochowa", "Przemysl," and some more jaw-breakers like that.

"Ach Gott, er ist ein Russlander, Hans!" fatty grunted. "Let him be. The Russians are fools, not enemies like the English. He'll rot out here where he is, without our help, and save you from getting your dear gun all bloody. Hein?" and he lumbered off, Hans at his heels "straffing" the English to beat anything I ever heard.

"My heart was going wallopy-bang-thump

and the pit of my stomach felt all caved in, even without the shrapnel tear in it, and I was so thirsty I just wanted to cry, but at that I was awful grateful to God that they'd let me alone and hadn't smashed my face in. Then I fainted again and then Charlie got me, and there you are!"

"And do you mean to tell me you got no war decoration?" the Senator cried indignantly.

" 'Course I didn't," Buster smiled. "Not for myself. All us boys were doing that same sort of thing whenever we got the chance, and unless a French officer happened to see us, we never liked to mention it. The only reason Charlie got his Croix de Guerre was 'cause Dr. Pinel saw him bring me in, with a rifle fire at his heels that must have been awful. None of us ever talked, 'cause there was so much rot in the papers over here anyhow about the French decorating an American for any old thing, that we'd have died before we bragged. It used to make Mr. Norton just hopping! Any way our Convoy got 'cité' for that night's work for the second time, and that was just great. We did have good team work in our Convoy, and we were all proud as Punch of it, too. Downright chesty, Mr. Norton said. Same sort of thing as school spirit. Same 'esprit de corps' that you have in a good Scout troop, Billy. Keep clean, be man enough to say your prayers,

have as much fun as you can if you get the chance, and don't talk about it."

"Oh, get out," quite sullenly from Van, "You're a million times more worth while than a boy scout! You've done real things, you know, and not just played soldier like they do."

"Scouts don't play soldier, as you call it, Van," Buster retorted. "They are more like our Service than the Army. Just do things and don't talk afterwards," and, in a lower voice, "they're very much like Billy Hoover over there, the best of them. Husky and clean in body, clean in thought and in talk and try to travel with a clean crowd. I believe it would just about kill Billy to know that any boy he really liked wasn't straight. Haven't you found him that way, Wardy? Lots of fun, but clean all through?"

"I dunno," Warfield answered in a strange voice and, getting to his feet, he walked away from the rest, until he got among the dusky silent places of the great pines, where he stopped and rested his arms against the kindly rough bark of a big tree and, burying his hot face in them, began to cry.

A soft little breeze had sprung up, clearing the mists away so that a big, copper moon could smile down through the pine boughs, and it kissed the rumped tow head kindly, while through the soft, southern night the velvety sounds of the scout's contralto pulsed

with a grave tenderness, that was a part of his low voice, singing an old thing of Gounod's; a thing loved on all the battle fields of life, whether at the distant Verdun of Buster's dreams, or across the bruised plain of a young boy's aching heart.

"There is a green hill far away,
Without a city wall,
Where the dear Lord was crucified,
Who died to save us all.

We may not know, we cannot tell,
What pains He had to bear,
But we believe it was for us
He hung and suffered there."

Not the childish gorgeousness of Don's soprano, but the sweet, earnest song of the southern chorister boy, manly and simple in the well-trained tones that had sung the old maitre's song in his home cathedral, a sturdy confession of the scout's own simple, big hearted faith, young and boyish in voice, but as manly as a youthful St. Paul.

"He died that we might be forgiven,
He died to make us good,
That we might go at last to heaven
Saved by His precious blood."

"Oh, God, please—a fellow just can't know all he ought to do, when he's fourteen years

old. I—I dunno how to say my prayers, like—like Billy, and Buster, and—and good boys—but you helped Buster out on that battle field in France—and so won't you please help me now? Oh, I know I'm a bad boy—but I want to get straight—and be a scout—and—oh, please, I'll be a good boy, an' tell—everything—yes I will—but, Oh Gee! I'm scared, I'm so scared! Won't you please help me? Please, please, please—for Christ's sake. Amen."

"Oh, dearly, dearly has He loved!
And we must love him, too,
And trust in His redeeming blood,
And try His works to do."

Then all quiet, for the boys were to spend the night at camp, and, a little later, just as Warfield walked sturdily back to the others, out rang the last message for the day, Taps, with it's caution, "Lights are out", a word of rest for all tired, battle weary men wherever a hard fight is fought the great world over.

CHAPTER XI.

"He loves to be little, he hates to be big,
'Tis he that inhabits the cave that you dig;
'Tis he, when you play with your soldiers of tin
That sides with the Frenchmen and never can win."

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

"Prince Henry: What man?

Sheriff: One of them is well known, my gracious lord;
a gross, fat man.

Carrier: As fat as butter."

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

"It's the play-time port for Service boys to go."

From "THE SAGA OF AN UNSUNG SERVICE."

CONTAINING A BRIEF CONSTRUCTIVE INTER-
VIEW, OF OFFICIAL CHARACTER, WITH
SCOUT MASTER PEPPER SLOAN

"Oh, Gee! Here comes the Bum-boat boy!"

It was very early the next morning, and Billy Hoover, stretching his pajama-clad body sleepily, tumbled off his army cot and out of the cabin, the dew-wet grass of the clearing feeling pleasantly cool to his bare feet.

Standing at the side of the roadway was a huckster's wagon, pulled by two small, very

sleek mules, and piled high with every sort of article from the vegetable kingdom that happened to be in season at the time. Sitting on the seat, in overalls and a sleeveless undershirt, was the seller of these wares, his white feet swinging comfortably over the side. He was known to the buying world about Doolittle as Coonie Black.

He was a fat boy, or at all events a very chubby one, but as strong as a young ox for his fifteen years. He had light brown hair, a jolly, impudent face of the "shining morning" variety, and blue eyes that crinkled about their corners with suppressed fun. He hailed originally from Howard County, Maryland, and held the inhabitants of Dolittle, both the workers in the cotton mill and the near-by farmers, in cheerful contempt, as lazy, shiftless people, quite out of his own energetic world. His idea of Heaven was the Lexington Street market, Baltimore, and his notions about the other place were, as he expressed it, "just like Dolittle, only maybe a little bigger." As to Coonie Black, himself, his worst enemy could never have accused him of laziness, for he was busy every minute of his day, and you could see him, almost any time from four o'clock in the morning on, working sturdily in his big brother's truck farm. A young cabbage was to him as the fairest of roses, and a head of lettuce, particularly if out of season,

filled his plump heart with an ecstasy that no orchid ever grown could have equaled. He was an ambitious youngster, and studied, as the scout used to say, "like the dickens", and you were always certain to find a book thrust in his hip pocket, anything from an Appleton's Speller, to a Bennett's Latin, or a Gilder-sleave's Greek Grammar, or possibly a Wentworth's School Algebra. Billy studied conscientiously, because he felt that a good scout ought to do the best he could with his lessons, but the fat boy actually got fun out of it. Anything that "helped him along" was a joy to him. So he and Billy often got in an hour's work together, while the latter was helping Coonie with his butter beans, and many a page in English History was read aloud by the one, while the other hoed sugar corn, taking turn and turn about. The dream of Coonie Black's young life was for him and his brother Philip, to save up money enough to buy their small truck farm outright, for at present they rented it from the Folly Quarters, and so he saved his spare money as carefully as the scout did his; though with less anguish, for Billy had a weakness for candy that amounted to a passion.

"Say, Coonie," Billy said reproachfully, after fifteen minutes of the most spirited haggling over various bits of food produce, "It's just scan'lous to ask thirty-five cents for those peaches! They're runts, that's what they are."

"Why, I think they're lovely," Coonie grinned. "If you hit 'em with a potato masher, they squash—just as easy! Honest they do. But I'm going to give you a whole peck of them, for helping me work those tomatoes last Tuesday. I'd been hoeing yet if you hadn't answered my S. O. S. Say, those scout signals come in fine, don't they?"

It was Billy's turn to grin now, and he did so, most broadly.

"Sure," he assented. "When ever I hear you whistle 'Patrol Leaders come here', I know those three short blasts and one long one mean more than the Handbook ever says, 'cause they mean 'Patrol Leaders come here—and bring a hoe along, too.' "

"That's nothing!" from the placid Coonie. "When Wardy Brown gives that whistle from the back porch of the Folly Quarters—he knows the signals as good as you, now—it means 'Patrol Leaders come here—and bring the rent along!' Say, Billy, when do we start that troop? I'm in on that, if I can only get the time, and if Dr. Pepper will have me."

"Jabber, jabber, jabber! Talk, talk, talk!" came the voice of Pepper Sloan, as he emerged from his cabin, a Greek athlete from the neck down, a fuzzy bath-towel about his thighs. "How do you expect a long suffering chap to get any sleep, you kids? 'Morning, Coonie! Chin, chin, Scout!"

Both youngsters drew themselves up and saluted, Boy Scout fashion, and Pepper, with a grin, returned the salutation twice, once with the Service, once with the Scout salute.

"When you going to organize, Doctor?" the Black boy asked.

"Now, if not sooner, Scout Husky," the cheerful Pepper flung back. "It will be loads of fun. I feel like a kid about it, honestly I do. Haven't been as thrilled since I got my commission. We organize this afternoon. Time, five-thirty. Place, your brother Philip's farm. The other boys all know about it, and so do you now. I'd have sent you word, only I knew you'd be around here with the bum-boat—that's Navy slang for the little harbor craft that come along side of a battleship to sell stuff, Coonie."

"Sure, I know. Billy told me. Phil says I must'nt let up in my work when I join the Scouts," this last with some gloom.

"Huh!" from Billy. "You wouldn't be a real scout if you did. Would he, Pep—I mean Dr. Sloan?"

"Of course not. We're organizing this troop for work. Farm work, field work, muscle work and brain work—heart work too, I hope. All Governmental work, too, with the august eyes of the S. G. and our own K. O." (Service slang for Surgeon General and Commanding Officer, respectively) upon us. The

K. O. is with us, and as to the S. G., why, boys, Washington has a chronic hypermetropia (far sightedness, you know) that would make de Schweinitz green with envy, a boon to any eye clinic in the world. Washington sees near and far, I can tell you."

"List to my tale, old son. Once upon a time, about eight months ago, just after I was in the Service, Spot Welford's papa sent him a great big check, and so he and I clubbed in together and bought a flivver runabout. We were stationed at San Francisco at the time. You'd have thought that was a good, safe distance from Washington, wouldn't you? Not so, for the Surgeon General's eye was upon us. A chap named Tuft, a P. A., was in on the deal, too. Washington squints Frisco-wards, and grins an official grin. 'Huh!' it grunts, 'those boys must think they are going to live at the Pacific station, buying automobiles that way. What ho! my jolly head of the Personnel, show them their proper places, and strafe them like the foolish young cubs they are. Just like an Assistant Surgeon's nerve, to say nothing of a Past Assistant's, isn't it, Mister Personnelman?' Well, what happened? The P. A. is in Honolulu, I got New Orleans, and Spot came across to Delaware Breakwater, where he joined his ship, the revenue cutter Onandaga. Now, we are here on field work, Spot and I, and the P. A. has moved on to the Philipines—

and the flivver? Well, the flivver may be back with Papa Ford in Detroit, for all I know."

"But what about our sanitary work, and all the rest of the scout stuff?" Billy asked, laughing, but a bit impatient.

"It is humming, old son, like the merriest of Maeterlinck's bees," Pepper replied. "It's just 'bee-yu-tiful', to use your own words, Billy. The Chief tells me that the Honorable, the Secretary of War, to say nothing of the Honorable, the Secretary of the Navy, (jolly good friends to our Service, the Navy, especially their S. G., Dr. Braistead) is at this moment wailing most dismally for properly sanitated training camps for the men who come in on that June Registration Act, willy nilly, and I have no doubt that General Pershing, and General Sibert—the man that built the great Gatun dam on the Isthmus, Coonie—are calling lustily over the waves for more troops, and more troops, and more troops."

"Gee, but it'll be big work, won't it?" the scout cried proudly. "Bet our South Carolina camps won't have any of the malaria-typhoid disgraces in 'em that they had during the Spanish-American war back in '98! Golly, but we're lucky to have a world famous sanitarian, like the Chief, to show us things—and such a peach of a Scout Master to boss us!" this last with a funny little grin, half impish and half shy.

"Thanks for them kind words, Billy Scout,"

Pepper laughed, though he blushed a little too, for Billy's open adoration for this pink and white, freckled young officer was an open fact in camp that touched the very nicest side of Pepper's character, though he felt a little teased about it, too. "We'll all do our best to make the camps that will make the men that will make Pershing's soldier boys. Won't we, Scouts all?"

"You just bet we will!" from Coonie Black, with enthusiasm. "Good-bye, Scout Master. I got to hustle. So long, Billy!" and once more saluting, he drove off, whistling cheerfully. Suddenly he pulled up.

"Whoa!" he called. "Yay, Scout! Ain't that Van Lear Cubb a nice little boy? Told Phil yesterday morning that 'hoi polloi' bored him—that's Greek, but I bet a jit Van don't know it. I'm just crazy about that kid myself!"

Billy laughed.

"Crazy in the head with the heat, you mean! Isn't he, Dr. Sloan? Why that boy just don't care what he says! Look out, or Van Lear may lick you, Coonie, old Scout!"

"Like fun he will!" the chubby huckster boy flung over his shoulder as he drove off. "Say, Scout, give Van my love, will you?" and he disappeared in a cloud of dust, while Pepper raced off toward the swimming hole, Billy Hoover at his heels, stripping as he ran along.

CHAPTER XII

"Dauntless the slug-horn to my lips I set
And blew—'*Childe Roland to the dark tower came.*'"

ROBERT BROWNING.

"Weary among the Arctic storms,
On gallant Grenfell's service lent—
Those were big times, a brave heart warms,
To think of all our Service meant."
From "THE SAGA OF AN UNSUNG SERVICE."

FIRST AID

Immediately after breakfast, or "Coffee" as the Chief loved to call it, after his many years in the tropics, and while Billy was busy washing the dishes, young Van Lear walked into the kitchen and at once began to talk beligerently, his face so flushed that the freckles quite disappeared.

"I heard what you and that vegetable pedlar said about me," he flared angrily.

"Oh, I'm sorry, honest I am," the scout cried sincerely, though he stood his ground sturdily enough. "Indeed, Van, we didn't mean to hurt your feelings, and—"

"Well, you're a fresh lot. Like all Boy Scouts, and you just watch me get even, that's all. That fatty's not worth a licking, but I bet I get even, all the same."

"Now look here," the scout interrupted still patient, though his eyes narrowed dangerously. "I guess we were sort of fresh, and pretty unkind too in what we said, but you've been ever so rude to us, Van. Downright tough, I call it. It wasn't very nice of you to tell Phil Black that 'hoi polloi' bored you, and a real boy's got no business getting bored anyway."

"Why, he didn't know who hoi polloi were, not for a minute."

"No, but Coonie did—he can read Theocritus some, which is more than I can do."

"Well, I'll be durned!" Van flushed uncomfortably. "I never had an idea of that, but," doggedly, "I'll get even," and he marched out looking very sulky.

Wardy came in just then, and walking straight up to Billy, told him like a man, of his escapade with Gopher Bean, while the scout's hand rested firmly on his shoulder with all his old affection, as he talked, so that he felt comforted and, for the first time in months, entirely at peace.

"I think you're just splendid, Wardy," Billy said admiringly, "and I hope I would have been man enough to do like you have done, and own up, if I had been in your place. It's just great

you told me this morning, 'cause you'll feel lots more like getting down to scout work this afternoon. Gee, you old tow-head, you'll make a dandy Patrol Leader. I'm going to ask Pepper to let me be in your Patrol, as Assistant Patrol Leader, if you want to have me."

"Billy!" Warfield's eyes were big and misty with all the old friendliness. "You must think I'm crazy. You be Assistant Patrol Leader, under *me*! Why, fellow, you've taught me all I know about the Scouts, and—and—" a break in his voice, "about being a man, too. A—a boy just has to be decent if he chums with you, Billy. You've got to be Senior Patrol Leader of our Troop, and—and just you let me be in your Patrol, you dear old scout, won't you?"

"Oh, now, Wardy," Billy smiled, "I'm Patrol Leader in the Bull Dogs, when I get back to Charleston this Fall, but you're the boy that Pepper has had his eye on for Senior of his troop for ever so long. I—I don't want to hurt your feelings, Wardy, but Pepper said that if you could go through a trial like this, and be man enough to own up you—you stole something, and were sorry for it, when you had a way out through Van's help, that he'd just know you were spunky enough for anything, from a Boy Scout to a Field Marshal. You're not mad, are you Wardy?" for the smaller boy's face had flushed deeply with shame.

"Yes, I am, but I won't let go," he flung back sturdily. Then he grinned a little. "A Boy Scout ought not to be getting mad all the time, like I do. You hold on a lot, Billy, though I have seen you mad once. I'm through with Van. He's a cad, and he can keep his Remington sixteen. I—I sure did want that gun, though. Honest I did, Billy. But I'm through with Van."

"Well, I'm not, and I don't believe you are either. Buster and Pepper Sloan talked to me about him, down in the swimming hole this morning, and they say we ought to make a scout out of him. He's got a dandy body for a scout you know. Tough as anything all over." Then with a sigh, "I think he's the freshest thing I ever saw in knickers, myself, but—well, we've got to give him a chance, scoutlike. It would be heaps more fun to punch his head for him, though. It needs punching, Wardy. Came in here just now and read the riot act. 'Course he had a right to be mad, 'cause Coonie and I did talk pretty rough about him this morning, but he must have been spying around, or he'd never have heard it. I wouldn't hurt any fellow's feelings, if I could help it, but I never knew that Van was out of his bunk at the time."

Wardy's was a tough, rugged small nature, that hated a compromise of all things on earth—"Off with the bad, and on with the good"

being his motto, and the idea of helping the bad to become good was hard for him to understand, but he was too fond of the scout just now not to be willing to help him to his utmost. Anything to be one with the clean, jolly life of the Service fellows at Camp Ross!

About ten o'clock, therefore, he climbed into Van's Pathfinder along with Don and its owner, and waved a friendly good-bye to the only two olive drab figures left at the camp, Buster and the scout.

Van Lear, at the wheel, brought the car out of the clearing and into the road in a short, skilful sweep and then, yelling a hearty, "So long, Buster!" to the Assistant Surgeon General's son, and ignoring the scout all together, threw his gear into high, and sped away in a cloud of dust.

After a few minutes they swung around a curve and saw in front of them, about half a mile off, a huckster's wagon, drawn by two small, very sleek mules, moving at a slow trot.

"Hullo, that's Coonie Black!" Warfield laughed. "The old boy's making for over on Sago, I bet, to finish selling his stuff."

"Oh, that's Coonie Black, is it?" Van asked, his eyes narrowing with anger. "Watch me scare the life out of him."

"You'll have the toughest job you ever tackled, if you try it," Wardy jibed, but the next second he turned very white, and looked

scared, for the car, in answer to a light pressure from Van's foot, began to shoot through the short space between the car and the wagon at a speed that sent the breeze whipping around the windshield in a gale.

"Oh, I say, Van—Sound your horn! Van! Quick!" Wardy cried in dismay, reaching over Don, who was in the middle, for the automatic button.

"Oh, sit still, Wardy," Van laughed. "I'm just going to whiz by his old mules and graze them a little. I won't hurt anything, only scare him to death. A brute like that needs to know his place. I—"

A scream from Don, a quick exclamation from the huckster boy as he tried to pull his team to one side of the road, and then a splintering, tearing sound, mingled with the shattering of glass and the crushing of metal and then stillness, for Van, in trying to keep Wardy from sounding his horn, had thrown his steering gear a little too far to the left, so that the on-rushing car had struck the wagon at its front, killing one of the poor, little mules, while the other plunged to get free of its harness, dragging the broken wagon and the crushed machine for some distance, until he stumbled in the tangle of harness and fell.

Warfield, with a long cut in his scalp, and with a burning pain in his shoulder that made him gasp, but otherwise unhurt, was the first

to get to his legs, and with the quickness of a farm boy, his first act was to run to the wagon and cut the leather traces, so that the frightened mule could be free and would stop kicking, for, crumpled up at the side of the wagon, one foot caught in the break-jam, and hanging head downwards in a forlorn heap, was the stout huckster boy, his eyes closed, his face chalky, under his dusty, blood-matted brown hair, from a cut he had got as his head struck on some stone while he was being dragged. He adored his little mules, poor boy, and he had tried to jump out to save them.

Wardy tried to lift him, but he was much too heavy for the tow-headed youngster to handle alone, so the best to be done was to loosen the break-jam, and let him slip gently to the roadside, Wardy's arms supporting his weight. Luckily for all concerned, Mammy Lou, had supplied her darling "Li'l Marse" on the previous day with no less than three clean handkerchiefs and, though no longer clean, with the exception of one, they were at least bandages of some sort. Taking the best of the three, Wardy folded it, rather clumsily, but the very best he knew how, and pressed it in a sort of pad over the cut in the hucksters boy's head. He wished most awfully that he knew more about First Aid, but it was one branch that his young instructor in scoutcraft, Billy Hoover, avoided as the devil does holy water.

Still, with his small knowledge taken into consideration, Warfield was doing the best he could. He was coatless, but he managed to slip out of his sport shirt, during which process his shoulder muscle felt as if the ghost of the departed mule was tugging at it, and folded it, and slipped it gently, if awkwardly, under the other boy's head. Then he began to look for the other boys.

He found Van standing in the road behind his crushed Pathfinder, crying silently, not even raising his hands to his face to hide the big tears that tumbled down it. In fact, he was too shaken and too unhappy just now to know that he was crying. He was trembling a little, and looked ill, but beyond many bruises, he seemed quite unhurt.

"Are you hurt, Van?" Wardy demanded breathlessly.

"I don't know, but I hope so. I ought to be dead."

"Where's Don?"

"He is dead, I think. There, way across the road, in that ditch, where the car must have tossed him. And—and I killed him—Oh, God help me, God please help me!"

"He's—he's not dead at all!" Wardy grunted, without being at all sure he was right, and, after a look at the little heap of a red headed small boy in a white Norfolk suit, he felt so scared that he shivered as a great wave

of nausea swept over him. "Come on and help me lift him out of that ditch, Van. Aw, wake up, for goodness sake."

"I—I can't go over there, Wardy," Van blurted out miserably, a big sob breaking from him, though he was trying hard now not to cry. "I—I killed Don—and I've been so mean to him! so mean to him!"

"You make me awful sick!" Wardy flared, loosing his temper promptly. "What's eating you, anyway? Gee, I wish you were a man, Van Lear Cubb! Come on, I tell you!" Wardy ran to the other side of the road and flung himself into the ditch, on his knees, lifting Don's head onto his lap. "He ain't dead, no such a thing," he said, quite crossly. "But there's something wrong about him. Something busted inside, I reckon. Hold on, Donny, you know old Wardy wouldn't hurt you. Don't look so funny. Please don't, Don. Golly-day man! I b'lieve he is dead, after all. Why he's as white as Billy Hoover in swimming!"

"I said I'd killed him," Van whispered brokenly, gazing down at them from the top of the ditch.

"Shut up, or I'll climb right out and punch your head!" Wardy blazed, mad all over, as he glared up at the older lad above him and tenderly wiped the sweat off Don's face at the same time. "I want to get hold of my scout whistle, but my—my blamed arm, or shoulder,

or something hurts so bad I—I just can't make it. Come on down here before I lick you, and reach it out for me. It's on the inside of my undershirt, right next to my skin, and all you have to do is to pull it up by that lanyard 'round my neck."

Van jumped down into the ditch and got the whistle, and Wardy, gripping the flat metal mouthpiece between his white teeth, sent out a shriek of sound over the warmth of woods and meadows about him, first the three short blasts followed by the one long one, for "Patrol Leaders come here," and then the agitated, staccato screams of alarm, very short, loud blasts, the call of a scout who begs for immediate aid—"Rally—Come at once."

Far away, and so faint that it sounded like a dream whistle, came back two short, clear-cut blasts from the direction of Camp Ross, the sign that a whistle message has been received and understood, and Wardy, taking Van's coat and rolling it into a pillow for Don, climbed heavily from the ditch, and pressing his last handkerchief over the cut on his own head, he grinned rather shakily.

"Billy's coming, Van! So I don't care. We're all right. Now, help me with Don when I tell you. Aw, if I got as scared as you do, I'd get me a nurse. Honest I would. My Buster-bunny's got more nerve than you! Great Scots, you're crying again! Can't you

quit for five minutes? Well, holler away, then! I'm going to see if I can do anything more for poor old Coonie. Oh, I wish I really knew something about First Aid! Me and Coonie would have been scouts together this afternoon, if—if—gee, I could lick you good, Van!"

He stumbled over to the wrecked wagon and dropped on his knees at the huckster boy's side, finding him just as he had left him, huddled in the dust, a dreadful little pool of blood at his head; much more blood than had been there before. Wardy lifted him a little, and the boy moaned with pain.

"Come here, you lummo!" Wardy cried, angry and frightened. "Come here, Van, and just take a look at some more of your day's work!"

"I'll stay by my kid brother, Warfield," Van called back, his voice at last perfectly steady.

"Well, I don't care much where you stay!" Wardy growled. "You talk about killing Don. Well, I believe you have killed this kid, and if you have, I'll punch your head, see if I don't. Aw, Gee! What's happening now," for he had removed the pad of handkerchief, now very wet, from the older boy's head, in order to replace it by the one from his own, and he saw very red blood spurting up in little jets, with the exact precision of a watch's tick, so he slapped his own pad over the cut quickly.

He was badly scared now, but he felt he

must do his best until Billy should arrive with his small Red Cross kit, that all properly equipped scouts have with them all the time, so he pressed the handkerchief tightly over the other boy's wound, only stopping now and then to glare under the wagon body at Van, or to raise one arm to brush away the drops of blood that now and then trickled in a dull stain from his own tow head over his forehead and into his eyes.

At last the far off "chug" of a motorcycle could be heard, and, a couple of minutes later, it swept into sight, around the curve. On the seat sat the scout, his face white and set anxiously, his scout hat crammed on the back of his head, and, better sight still at this time, was Buster, clinging cheerfully on the extra seat behind, his "plume" fluffing like a golden oriflame as the wind played through his uncovered hair. He did not look at all anxious, and was as pink and wholesome as usual, but he did look deeply interested and efficiently purposeful—every inch of his hard training showing in his cheerful coolness—a real Red Cross man.

CHAPTER XIII.

"In drippin' darkness, far and near,
All night I've sought them woeful ones.
Dawn shudders up, and still I 'ear
The crimson chorus of the guns.
Look! like a ball of blood, the sun
'Angs o'er the scene of wrath and wrong . . .
'Quick! Stretcher-bearers, on the run!
O Prince of Peace! 'Ow long, 'ow long?"

ROBERT SERVICE.

"All that was truest, kindest, best he gave us.
Shared his few joys.
Always his wise, paternal arm to save us
All we, 'his boys.' "

From "THE SAGA OF AN UNSUNG SERVICE."

THE RED CROSS MAN

"Anybody hurt?" was Billy Hoover's first remark, to be followed by "Gee! It's First Aid work!" with the most wretched gloom, as he and Buster flung themselves from the motorcycle and hurried toward the wreckage of the machine.

"All of a bit of a mess, isn't it?" Buster remarked cheerfully, as he strode forward, past the scout. "Hello, this does look bad, though!"

becoming grave, as his eyes fell upon Wardy, with the huckster boy's head in his lap. "Poor, old Wardy! Pretty badly shaken up, old fellow?"

"Yes, I am, Buster," Warfield answered, his eyes filling for the first time. "It's been—just awful. You see it happened this way. That idiot of a Van—"

"I don't care how it happened, Wardy," Buster interrupted, as he knelt down by his side. "French or Hun, all one, you know. Take off that pad from his head, please. Easy, easy! Hot dog! He's bleeding like the dickens, but I never saw a wound about the head yet, that wasn't a perfect slop! You poor, little kid, your own head is bloody, too. I'll take a look at it in a second. There's some little artery cut in two in Coonie's scalp. Blood's too red for anything else, and look how it spurts! Hi, Billy, bring me that First Aid kit. On the run, old Scout."

"I can't come, Buster," in a perfectly steady voice from Billy. "I'm busy over here. Van, take this kit to Buster, right quick, please."

"Thanks, Kamarad!" from Buster, as he took the small package, already opened. "Now, where the dickens!—Oh, here you are!" picking up a fold of sterile gauze at one corner and, with an expert shake, whipping it out into a flat pad. "Just what I want. God bless the women that fold this stuff for immediate use!

Now, Wardy, reach in my hip pocket and you'll find a clean handkerchief. A nice, big one, too. That's it. Soon as I get this bleeding stopped, I want you to help me strip him off so I can see if he's hurt anywhere else, externally. Internal injuries are not for a Red Cross man to play with. That's the doctor's business. *Never try to do too much.* Van, take that flat leather seat out of the wagon, and put it on the ground here. I can't help either of you, for I've got to keep up this pressure, you see. Good boy, Van. Now, Wardy, open my handkerchief, and then fold it once, to make a triangle, so the point is toward you. See that straight line, at the base, away from the point? Good. Fold her over in a two inch hem. Fine! Now, fold the point of the triangle, opposite the hem, about five inches, underneath, and lay it on our sick boy's head, with the hem just above his eyebrows." Slipping his hand from under this homemade bandage, where he had been pressing the sterile gauze pad in place, he squinted at the two ends of the handkerchief that hung down over the huckster boy's ears, and carefully pleated them into four neat little folds that lay quite smoothly, as he brought the ends around the head, crossed their points at the back and brought them at last to the front, tying them firmly in the middle of the boy's forehead. "Now, that ought to hold that pad good and firm underneath, and control the bleeding

until we can get him into camp. Let's see if he's hurt anywhere else."

After stripping off the unconscious boy's clothes, and looking him over carefully, Buster grunted his satisfaction that he was, "quite in the pink," except for a bruised, and slightly bleeding right foot, where the break-jam had caught it.

"We'll just leave that foot alone," he said. "Better not bandage it, even, for there's very little bleeding, and whenever you can leave a wound open to the air, do it. That's how they are treating all sorts of wounds over in France, and Pepper says it's the same way in Great Britain. He was over there, inspecting base hospitals for our Government just before he was ordered on field work with Dad. He said the surgical hospitals looked more like our tuberculosis camps than anything else. Wide open to the south all the time, and when possible, open on all sides, with the wounds dressed to let them get the air as much as they could. Sterile gauze padding around them, held in place as a rule with strips of adhesive, but only one layer of gauze over them, nary a bandage anywhere. No, we'll let that foot alone. Just lift up his leg, Van, and rest the heel on that wagon hub so it will stay elevated. That's the boy. Of course if there is lots of bleeding, like this scalp wound here, you've just got to pack it and keep it covered. I crammed

the palm of my hand, one time, dirt and all, into a gap in a German Uhlan's neck, to keep him from bleeding to death. Have to do it in a case like that. Don't worry about bringing our boy to, Wardy. He's just fainted, and he'll suffer lots less this way. Now, how about yourself. Anything except that head? That's clotted of itself, and I'd rather leave it for one of the doctors to fix properly. Always do just as little as you can get along with in First Aid. That's one big thing we learnt in the trenches. Leave it to the M. D. at the nearest "poste de secour"—at Camp Ross, I mean. You say your shoulder's hurt? Let's take a look at it. Let me slit that gauze shirt with my knife, and it won't hurt you getting it off. Huh! Sprained, I guess, or something like that. The two shoulders look as square and jolly as usual, you young husky. Same length, and all, so nothing is out of place. Mighty glad, old man."

"Please—Buster—if—I mean will you please look at Don now?"

"Sure, Van? Is he hurt much?"

"I—I think he's dead."

"Shoo-oo! Get out! A twelve-year-old's got a bulldog grip on life, boy. Where is he?" and, getting to his legs, he followed Van Lear quickly, wiping the blood from his hand quite calmly on the leg of his olive drab pants.

Once at the bottom of the ditch, he took a

quick look at the small boy, now naked to his waist where the scout had stripped off his white Norfolk jacket and shirt with the help of the knife that always hung from one of his belt hooks.

"Why—what the dickens!" he frowned. Then he laid one hand over the child's breast, to the left, and gave a big sigh of relief. Placing the same hand now on Billy's olive drab shoulder firmly, he spoke again. "You're all sorts of a trump, Billy Hoover," he said with the proud affection of a father. "Keep your hand right where it is, close up under his armpit. Got anything between it and his skin? And say, could you see what sort of a wound it was, or was there too much blood?" and to himself, "Why, the kid isn't even pale now, he's as interested as—as I am."

Billy, his arms bare to the elbow, and the right hand and wrist smeared with as much blood as a surgeon's, looked up gravely, and smiled his relief at seeing Buster at hand. His mouth was set, his round face very earnest, but his whole heavy set body was perfectly quiet and stolid.

"It's a gash, a tear, very jagged you know, running right under his armpit, and half way down his right side, between the armpit and his breast," he explained, looking up at Buster and passing one hand across his hot face, quite careless of the bloody smudge it left on his

cheek. "See, all there where his right side is smeared. I got some gauze stuffed in it, and some laid over it, but I guess it ain't very sterile, 'cause I don't know how to open those pads like you do. I'm ever so clumsy at it, Buster. I have to have my hand on it, with the palm out this way, to make pressure, 'cause he's bleeding so terribly. I'm bearing down with my other hand, the left one you see, 'cause I can feel the artery, or something, jumping and throbbing under my thumb, and every time it jumps it means another spurt of blood."

"Oh, it's a severed artery, all right," from the perfectly cool Buster. "This boy would have bled to death, I believe, if you hadn't had the sense to strip him and see what was wrong. Gee, I'm proud of you, Scout! And you're the boy that hates First Aid, and can't get a merit badge in it. Just because you were never up against the real thing, before, I bet. Say, have you got a real triangle bandage in that kit of yours? I only had one handkerchief big enough to do any good, and I had to use that on Coonie Black's head. Oh, you have? Bully! Hand me that kit, Van. Now, for pity's sake, don't faint! There's nothing to get sick, that I can see. Just some blood, and some dirt!"

"But—Don looks so sick—and—and white."

"Yes, guess he feels that way, too. But you don't want him to get any sicker or whiter,

do you? 'Course you don't. Here we are! Now, take your hands out of that wound, Billy! Huh! have to take a chance of infection in a case like this! Let's have a look at it. No chance for a tourniquet there, you see. Now, all the gauze we've got. Don't mind being sort of clumsy, Scout. You've gone through a lot already, and you've done dandy work, and you never belonged to Le Section Sanitaire Automobile Americaine, No. 7, either, like I have. Here's one more time I can thank God for that training, Billy. I do thank Him, ever so. Lay that gauze on in layers. Don't think of taking out your packing. I've got my hands busy keeping up pressure on that severed artery. No, take my place. Thanks. Got any adhesive? Darn it! I just felt you wouldn't have! Well, here goes the next best thing so far as I know. Hold that gauze packing in place with your right hand, and keep your left thumb pressing like you did before. That's the boy. Billy, you're great!"

Stooping over Don's limp little body, he took the big triangular bandage and placed one point over the boy's left shoulder, the opposite end hanging below his waist line, to the right side of his stomach, and the third point, opposite the base that ran down his body, passing under the right armpit and around, so that it was easily tied firmly with the upper point, brought over the left shoulder, at a space just

between the small boy's shoulder blades. Finally, pulling the bandage very tight indeed, so much so that the white skin puffed a little at its edges, Buster swung the bottom point at an angle, about four inches below Don's breasts, under the left arm so that it joined the other two ends in a hard knot between shoulder blades. Then he became suddenly very human, and patted the towseled red head affectionately, while he took the boy's pulse at his temple, even with his left ear.

"What do you make it, old son?" came a pleasantly calm voice at the top of the ditch, and a moment later, the cheerful Pepper had jumped in beside them.

"Thank goodness for that!" Buster sighed. "I'm all in, somehow."

"Feeling that place in your abdomen, I bet."

"Uh-huh! We're not much of a Red Cross man, these days, Pepper. Billy has been a host with banners, though."

"You're always praising the other fellow, Buster," Pepper smiled. "I bet Billy has done good work, though. You see, Van, my scouts are of use at times. We've got to get two poles, from somewhere in those woods, and make a stretcher. Get a couple, Van. Billy will lend you his woodman's hatchet. It's on his belt. Cut 'em about seven feet long. Lend us your khaki coat, Buster. That and my uniform blouse will be all right. Now, hustle,

Van, for we've got to get this kid back to camp, pronto."

Van, armed with the small woodman's hatchet, ran quickly into the woods, vaulting a high, rail fence quite easily, and returned in a few minutes with two hickory saplings, trimming off the small branches as he came, quite careless of the scratches on his face from the whipping undergrowth.

Pepper, now in command, took the poles with a quiet, "Thank you, Van," and, turning the two coats inside out, so that the sleeves were inside, he put the poles through them, one in each sleeve hole, with the bottom end of the coats touching. The poles once in, he buttoned the coats down the front, the buttoned side underneath, and they made an excellent stretcher. Then springing down once more into the ditch, he gathered Don into his arms and carried him out and laid him on it. Buster promptly picked up one end.

"What are you going to do?" Pepper demanded.

"Going to help to carry that kid back to camp."

"Not so you'd know it, old son," was the cheerful reply. "Let go of that, you Indian! You'll be sick for a month if you don't behave. Billy is going to help me. You run along on the motorcycle, and lay hold of anybody you can find to help you fix up some sort of an op-

erating room, in one of the cabins. We'll bring this boy in and then come back for the others. Wardy will take care of my other scout. Good lord, but I'm proud of my boys! Of course you're the skilled one, you old Red Cross man, and I give you lots of thanks for your work. You've helped Billy, here, to get that merit badge in First Aid, and a honor medal in life saving, too, I bet. Now, run ahead, like Tam O'Shanter's witches were after you and fix that operating room. You know how, probably better than I, in this rough and tumble work."

"I'll fix it the best I know how, Pepper," Buster blushed. "Just hang the walls with sheets, wrung out in a solution of one to one thousand bichloride. Then scrub a table, first with soap, then with bichloride, and the floor the same way, with a sheet under the table itself. Then, boil a blanket and pad the table with it, and cover with the sterile sheet. That's the best way I know, but I wish you'd tell me if it isn't just right."

"Of course it's all right, old son," from Pepper. "Get along, now—and don't try to shame a poor little Assistant Surgeon in the U. S. Public Health Service, with your humble manner, you war-trained, aged Red Cross man. Now, scoot!"—and Buster scooted.

CHAPTER XIV.

"To such a task we can dedicate our lives and our fortunes, everything that we are, and everything that we have, with the pride of those that know that the day has come when America is privileged to spend her blood and her might for the principles that gave her birth and happiness and the peace which she has treasured."

FROM PRESIDENT WOODROW WILSON'S ADDRESS BEFORE
CONGRESS, APRIL 2ND, 1917.

"It's a place for all good Service boys to stay, dear
Buccaneer,

Nor again the Seven Seas we'll have to roam;

For, when once across its borders

We'll be all on 'Waiting Orders,'

And at last us Service boys can stay at home—

(Fancy that!)

We'll have Departmental orders: 'Stay at home.' "

FROM "THE SAGA OF AN UNSUNG SERVICE."

THE BOY SCOUTS OF "OURS"

Over two weeks since the accident on the road between Camp Ross and the Folly Quarters, with August at the opening of its third week, a hot, sunny Sunday morning, between nine-thirty and ten.

The entire field force, both physicians and engineers, with their helpers, "dippers", chain-

men, and so forth, are loafing in peace, the warm air soft with the hazy, blue puffs of tobacco smoke. The Chief is leaning back in a low canvas deck-chair, reading, a cigar between the long fingers of one hand, while Buster is polishing the official leggings industriously. Surgeon James Montgomery Neems, his bald spot twinkling in the beams that dapple the oak leaves overhead, is smoking a Russian cigarette of great price, and changing the bronze buttons from a soiled, into a clean fatigue blouse, while the cheerful Pepper, immaculate as to shoes, leggings and riding trousers, after an hour's labor thereon, is affixing bronze insignia on the standing collar of his campaign shirt, only stopping long enough to squint critically at the welt from a mosquito bite (not from the camp vicinity, be it added, as that is now quite free from them, after careful drainage and oiling) on one bare shoulder, after which, the insignia being in place, he slips his arms into the shirt and tucks it neatly into his belt, about his slim waist, which being the completion of his official toilet, once the olive drab cap is set on his red head, he grunts with satisfaction and lifts his eyes with a look of pride toward a soldierly group of yellow Service tents, pitched to the western side of the clearing, the home of the twenty-four boys who now form Troop Number One, Dolittle, South Carolina, Boy Scouts of America. They

use the same mess as the officers, for the Assistant Surgeon General very properly counts them among his other sanitarians, if at present a bit clumsy in their technique, and the two articles that give the youthful mosquito chasers the most joyous pride just now, are the beautiful American flag (a gift from the Surgeon General in Washington) which is now fluttering before their council tent with their troop pennant near it, mounted on a staff of polished cherry, with a bronze eagle at the top, the gift of their dear Chief; and—number two, a knapsack oil spray, a tank-like affair with a strap to fasten it about the operator's body, and equipped with a short hose and a piston for scattering the kerosene oil over the ponds where *Anopheles* breed, should any of these venturesome insects still dare to breed in the neighborhood of such a husky lot of sanitary efficiency.

Khaki, tan leather and olive drab everywhere! A sort of monochrome in browns, relieved only by the three sets of handkerchiefs, eight for each Patrol, that are knotted about sun-browned young throats—gray, with a yellow border, for the Sea Gulls (so called because, in the opinion of the Scout Master, their Patrol Leader is a "regular, tow-headed Stormy Petrel"); brown, with a red border, for the Gophers; and gray and brown for the Pussy-cats. Each Patrol, by the way, holds

one over its official complement of boys, for all three have insisted on enrolling Don Cameron just now absent at the Johns Hopkins Hospital, as a charter member of their brotherhood. Their Troop Committee consists of United States Senator Joshua Cubb, (at present in Baltimore with Don), Assistant Surgeon General Ian Whitlock, U. S. P. H. S., and an inflammable old gentleman by the name of Anthony A. Blake, the President of the cotton mills at Dolittle, and the father of young Edward Blake, a slight, freckled face boy of fifteen, as dark as Van Lear himself, and most delightful from a boy's standpoint, full of a quiet, mischievous fun, peculiarly his own, and a gentleman every inch of him. Especially is this youngster (Assistant Leader of the rollicking Gopher Patrol) a favorite with the energetic martinet, Senior Surgeon John Iron, chiefly because that piece of official grimness and Ed's father equally grim, are become sworn friends, indulging in the most passionate disputes whenever they meet, and, in consequence, putting one another down as thoroughly delightful men—"so full of force!" Beside the above mentioned Patrol handkerchiefs, the general brownishness of things is further relieved, though to a less extent, by the white, cream, brown and, I am sorry to say, dirt color of twenty-four pair of knees, bare from the tops of rolled down stockings

four inches below the kneecap, to the bottoms of the khaki pants, four inches above.

Under the shade of a big tree, at the edge of ground between the scout encampment and the officers' cabins, a group of boys loafed in Sabbath peace. The corpulent Coonie Black, Patrol Leader of the Pussy-cats, looking round and happy in his very new uniform, was quite himself again, though under his brown felt scout hat, he still wore a generous patch of adhesive plaster. Close to him, curled up in lazy comfort, was his Assistant Patrol Leader, Van Lear Cubb.

In the sixteen days since Don's accident, certain small lines had come in the boy's dark skinned, freckled face, and they gave him a thoughtful, resolute look. Next to Billy Hoover, who he knew had saved Don's life, his best friend was the huckster boy; and the new mule, as small and sleek as its companion, that now trotted before the equally new vegetable wagon, was but one of his efforts to make things square with his fat chum. Just now he was telling Coonie and Billy about his trip up to Baltimore the week before, he and his grandfather and Don, in the drawing-room of a pullman, with a trained nurse from Charleston also in attendance.

"Don's getting along nicely now, isn't he, Van?" Billy asked.

"Sure. Don's all right. Granddad wrote me

that both Dr. Howland and Dr. Halstead say he's doing fine. It—it was pretty bad at first though. Grandad just wouldn't let me sit up on the train—treated me like a regular kid. But any fellow with sense could see how Don wanted me! It—it just about broke my heart, fellows—he looked so little, and hurt, and so—so tired, sort of. All I could do was to tell him, over and over, how sorry I was, and what you had said, Billy—that he was to be the first scout enrolled in our troop. When things got very bad, and he'd cry some, I'd tell him that over again, you know." A flush of embarrassment came over his dark face, "And I'd hold him some, and kiss him—he's my kid brother, you know, fellows."

Pepper, overhearing the greater part of this conversation, watched the boy out of the corner of his eye, and then smiled across to Dr. Jimmy Neems, who nodded a hearty approval in response.

Then the august presence of the Leader of the belligerent Sea Gulls joined the rest, none the worse for his adventures in First Aid, and as mischievous and purposeful, yes, and as truculent too, as ever—just a nice, roly-poly kid, kindhearted and quick, either for friendship or pugnacity. Without the sweet tempered, sane management of Billy Hoover, his Assistant, the Sea Gulls would have been having their heads punched on an average of three

times a day, Warfield priding himself on his Patrol discipline.

Just now his round face wore its broadest grin, as he curled up close to Billy and repeated some sky-larking in his tent on the previous night.

"No rough-house in our tents, is there old Scout?" Van bragged, clasping his bare knees in both hands and rocking himself backward and forward.

"I should say not!" from Coonie. "Me and this husky bunkie of mine won't have it. Will we, Van?"

"I should say not!" Van flung back with pride. "We've got dandy discipline in our Patrol, thank you."

"Huh!" from Wardy, raising up on one elbow, "You Pussy-cats ain't in the same class with us Sea Gulls! Discipline's our middle name, isn't it, Billy?"

"Course," Billy Hoover replied with a giggle. "Our Patrol is just bound to be the best in the troop, ain't it, Wardy-Scout? Just because it is ours."

"Well," from Ed Blake, his snubbed nose wrinkled in a mischievous grin, "I'm not saying much, but there isn't a one of you in a class with us Gophers! No sir! We've got the right name, to start with—haven't we, Bean-pole?" to his right hand neighbor, Patrol Leader Gopher Bean.

"'Cose we have, Ed," the Gopher smiled back, "And then, just look at the two fellows that boss our Patrol—'specially the Leader!"

Everybody began to laugh, and as they did so a girl cantered up to the clearing and reined in her horse with a practiced hand.

"Who's the oleander blossom, Pepper?" Dr. Neems inquired with jocularly, as he took out another cigarette from his heavy silver case.

Young Pepper made no answer, for he was on his legs at once, stumbling a little in his eagerness, and glancing shyly over his shoulder, now and then, at his brother officers, as he hurried toward the newcomer.

"Never saw Pepper rattled that way before," Lake White chuckled. "He don't like girls as a rule."

"The young lady looks—a bit masterful," the Chief smiled, glancing up from a copy of the "Atlantic Monthly". "Our Pepper had best be cautious. He should carefully digest the philosophy of Treitschke and Nietzsche, with their gospel of the right to the strongest, that they have so laboriously howled through the ages. Pepper is a nice boy, and should only go with a 'Kirche, Kuchen, Kinder' girl. Just look at the youngster, Hollis! He is as pink and breathless as a school-boy, or a second Richard Feverel."

"But nobody has answered my question," Jimmy Neems complained.

"As to the identity of your oleander blossom," from the smiling Chief, "never mind, Neems. Behold Master Pepper returning! No doubt he can solve the mystery for you. Bless those Boy Scouts, Hollis, the very sight of a girl in camp has made them as pink and bashful as—as Pepper himself."

"Approach the official shrine, Pepper," Dr. Neems chuckled, "and be catechised. Once again I demand to know the identity of the oleander blossom."

Pepper turned red, and stood before the older officers very shyly. He tried to speak, failed, wet his lips and tried again.

"Oh—that's just Anne Page," he said meekly. "She's such a nice girl. What you fellows laughing at? She is a nice girl, and I'll punch anybody's head that says she isn't."

"Nobody said she wasn't, you young Tristram," Mr. Hollis grinned. "Why I am sure you know far more about the young lady than the rest of us. You certainly look as if you did, and you act as if you—"

But now the Assistant Surgeon General took a kindly hand.

"Let him alone, Frank Hollis," he smiled, "That's a good fellow. Let Pepper have his romance in peace. It is his very first offense, I honestly believe. A very charming, clever face, Pepper."

"Yes sir," Pepper blushed gratefully, glanc-

ing up at his Chief for a moment just as a small red-headed school boy might look at his father, when the latter had taken his part, and then dropping his eyes again. "Her name is Anne Page, and I've known her since I was in knickers. She's only a few months younger than I, and she's a graduate nurse from the Hopkins. Left Baltimore last year to do Red Cross work somewhere in France, and now she's home, in Charleston, on her furlough."

"Oh, I know her!" Buster struck in, he was now Assistant Scout Master, by-the-way, "She was ever so good to me when I was sick at the American Hospital at Neuilly, Dad. We all called her Sister Anne, English fashion."

"Well, I reckon I know her, too!" very proudly from the scout ranks, as Billy Hoover swaggered up. "Say, she's my second cousin! Honest she is. She's a Virginia Page, and a Charleston Sewell! Gee!"

"Then may the Lord preserve us!" in a fervent aside from the smiling Chief. "Like our Cookie, I too would fain say 'Gee!' "

"Now watch out for the most fearful display of official Scout Masterly favoritism, Spot-to," Lake West laughed. "Billy is only an Assistant Patrol Leader, under our scrappy tow-head, but you just watch him fit into Buster's shoes, in spite of his few fourteen years, if Pepper has his way. 'Cherchez la femme,' Spotto, old boy!"

"I know her, too!" Van called, from his seat beside Coonie Black. "She's great! She was in Dolittle, visiting a chum of hers who is head-nurse at the Mill hospital, the day Grandad wanted a trained nurse for Don, and she grabbed her duffle, or whatever girls call their kit, and went right along with us to Baltimore. She had more sense! She knew just when to leave Don and me alone, and all that."

"Well, I don't know the young lady myself," in a gentle voice from Spotteswood Welford, "but I am going to. Just watch me, Lake."

"Not if I know it, old son," Pepper flung in with a shy grin, friendly, but determined, for Spot's good looks might prove very formidable.

"Well, we all want to know her, Pepper," the Chief said cordially. "I must thank her for all her kindness to my own boy. She 'specialed' Buster, you know. Since she has so many friends at Camp Ross, we will with your permission, give her a Continental breakfast, at eleven-thirty to-morrow morning. I have to go to Raleigh in the afternoon, but I will make it a point to be here for that. She has been so good to Buster."

"Oh, Anne's good to everybody!" from Pepper, now quite joyous.

"Is she good to you, Pepper?" Dr. Neems inquired with gusto.

"Sometimes," from the smiling Pepper. "I

say, Chief, she rode over here to see me about the Allied Bazar they're getting up in Charleston next month. It's to be in the Armory. She wants my—our—scouts to help, some in fancy togs to sell things, and the rest to be on actual service in the building."

"Excellent!" the Assistant Surgeon General assented. "If we can get that tract of land, over on Sago, sanitated properly, by the first of September, so that I can have the satisfaction of hearing a Marine bugle sound out over it, as an established training camp for that part of the Navy, I will say my 'Nunc dimittis' gladly, and feel that our Boy Scouts deserve a trip to Charleston, though even there they will be on duty, I suppose, in the Bazar work."

"Gee, but that's just great, Chief!" came the enraptured voice of Warfield Brown, as he trotted over, his most friendly grin on his mouth. "If—if only every thing gets straightened out with me, by then, I'll be glad all over to go, and—and us Scouts want to hear that Marine Corps bugle same as you, sir. Honest!" then, with much less enthusiasm, "Cousin Byrd is—is beginning to see things, just a little—it's ever so nice, I—I reckon—and he says he wants to drive over and use his eyes for one good look at what we've done."

"Yes, I understood his eyesight was really improving, and it is wonderful," Pepper put in kindly. "Those cases are awfully rare, for he

seemed to be totally blind. About your own troubles, Wardy, everything will come out all right, and as to our sanitary work, with a troop of scouts like you, we will make good in that, too. You see if we don't, old son."

"I say, old Scout Master," Warfield cried, looking up gratefully into the young officer's freckled face, "I think that trained nurse lady is—is real pretty! Oh, ever so! And she looks nice and jolly, too."

"She said the very same thing about you, Wardy," Pepper smiled.

"Honest?" Wardy dimpled. "I guess it was my new uniform," and he took in his own costume with pride, from his rough tan shoes, rolled stockings, bare knees, khaki pants, knit scout belt with its accoutrements of drinking cup, knife and woodman's hatchet, and the First Aid kit and canteen slung across his body by its canvas strap, going up with pardonable swagger as far as his round person was visible to his own eyes. He was really pleased that this young lady should like him, for she struck him as being just the right age for a nice, pleasant, big sister; for Pepper's feelings never entered his wholesome, boyish head for a second. He was just a normal fourteen-year-old, who liked to be liked by attractive grown-ups.

And now, clear and true, rang out the call from Billy's cornet:

Life with its way before His eyes,
Christ is the path, and Christ the prize."

"Faint not nor fear, His arms are near,
He changeth not, and thou art dear;
Only believe, and thou shalt see
That Christ is all in all to thee.

Amen."

CHAPTER XV.

"Falstaff: . . . There's villanous news abroad: here was
Sir John Bracy from your father; you must to
the court in the morning."

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

"Dol: Come, you rogue, come, bring me to a Justice.

Hostess: Ay, come, you starved bloodhound.

Dol: Goodman Death! Goodman Bones!

Hostess: Thou atomy, thou!

Dol: Come, you thin thing; come, you rascal!

1st Beadle: Very well . . ."

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

"Cardinal Wolsey: Take an inventory of all I have
To the last penny, 'tis the King's: my
robe,

And my integrity to Heaven is all
I dare now call mine own. O Crom-
well, Cromwell,

Had I but served my God with half
the zeal

I served my King, He would not in
mine age

Have left me naked to mine enemies."

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

"Slowly we lift Bermudas' shore,
Fair, warmy beach, a bejewelled toy
Gift of the Sea—ah, here dwelt of yore,
One with the soul of a Service boy!"
From "THE SAGA OF AN UNSUNG SERVICE."

LAW AND ORDER

The "Continental breakfast" planned by the Chief, was served with due *éclat* the next day, and Billy's cooking earned the highest praise from Anne Page, R. N. (Registered Nurse) and, with an appetite that greatly belied her golden, flower-like loveliness, she took two helpings of everything except the fried chicken, of which she took three. The Scouts, to a boy, voted her "just great," and she, for her part, said the Scouts were "fun", so that they all got on famously. It developed that this young person, with the face of a pretty, blonde boy rather than a girl (somewhat on Buster's type, by the way) and with the figure of a sweetly pale Cosmos, was a baseball twirler of no mean order, sending "Ins" and "Outs", and even a "Fade away" now and then, that left the boys (those in long trousers no less than their juniors) enraptured. She was as completely at home on a camp stool as any officer of the Service present, and with all her fun and her romping with the youngsters, there was nothing pert, for what she did was

simply to enjoy herself, and not to "show off" as a hoyden. She was alive to any mischief there was, and threw herself into it with the utmost glee, for whatever fun there was in it. At the American Hospital outside of Paris, at Neuilly, she was known, among her own sisterhood, so she explained with a dimple, as 'Penrod', and her claim to being named after Booth Tarkington's small-boy hero, lay solely in the number of scrapes into which she was constantly falling, and the funny manner in which she usually managed to get herself out of them. By the end of the meal, therefore, the Scouts were all calling her "Miss Penrod", greatly to her delight.

"General Whitlock," Miss Penrod said with the pretty deference she both felt and showed to her world-famous host, "I want to see that laboratory, for my adopted brothers have been bragging about it. They say we couldn't possibly have anything so gorgeous in Paris. They even said you had a real microscope in it, didn't you, Wardy?"

"You bet there is!" Warfield cried proudly, "and lots of stains, and—blood! Heaps and heaps of it! Gee!"

"Oh, most certainly 'Gee!', my dear," Miss Penrod dimpled, "And once again 'Gee!' Look out for that blood," and shaking one finger at the widely grinning Wardy, she quoted:

" 'Some little bug will get you—
Some day!'

and wouldn't that be awful? I would just hate to 'special' one of my kid brothers with an attack of pernicious malaria."

"Glad there are more than one, Anne," from a rather gloomy Pepper, "Safety in numbers, you know. Which two have you especially adopted, anyway?"

"Well," Anne Page smiled, "Number one is Wardy here—because his hair is just the color I would like my own to be, and number two is Billy, because his hair is the same color as mine happens to be! The other Scouts are all my first cousins, you know. Do I make myself quite clear, Pepper? Now, if the General is ready, I want to see that wonderful laboratory."

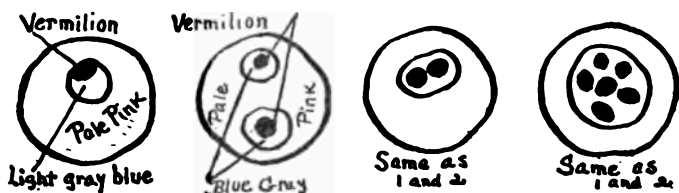
"Certainly I am ready, my dear," the Chief smiled, and with his own gracious charm, he led the girl to the small cabin that was fitted up as a rough laboratory, all the finer bacteriological work being sent to the Hygienic Laboratory at Washington.

It was a very ordinary affair, but Miss Penrod expressed herself as properly impressed, so that the two scouts were thoroughly pleased, and her interest became very real as the great sanitarian explained, with the graceful courtesy he always showed when giving explanations to the boys, as if they probably

knew exactly what he was talking about beforehand, about the isolation of malaria parasites at the very beginning of the technique—sterilizing the lobe of the sick person's ear with alcohol, sticking it with a sharp, needle-like instrument, putting a drop of blood on a glass slide and "drawing" it, (i. e. spreading out the blood drop in a thin smear on the slide by smoothing it with another slide.) Then, after it was dry, washing over it a polychrome stain (Eosin and Methylene Blue), leaving the solution on the slide for from two to three minutes and then dropping on the same amount of distilled water as polychrome stain, leaving it for from three to five minutes more, finally washing it all off with ordinary tap water, and then, after placing a thin little square cover glass over the part of the slide that holds the blood stain, and dropping a couple of drops of cedar oil on it to counteract the light refraction that is in all glass, place it under the strong lens of a microscope.

"Of course," he finished with a smile, "the germs, the plasmodia as we call them, Wardy, are then easily enough recognized. The red blood corpuscles stain pink, and inside of them we see the body of the malaria parasite or protoplasm, a charming blue, with a vivid red spot in it, the cromatin or neutral material staining red from the polychrome solution. It

looks like this, more or less," and he sketched in colored chalk:



"But I say, does it always jump spang right into the middle, Chief?" Billy demanded rather anxiously.

"N-no, not exactly that, Billy. The malaria germs get into the corpuscles, the red corpuscles of course, in an especial way that I'll tell you about in a minute."

"Say, that's a real pretty old picture, all the same, honest it is, Chief." Wardy cut in with a gentle, pleased look of admiration. "I think it's just great."

The Chief laughed and rumped Wardy's tow head.

"That is a so-so sketch of what you would see under the microscope in the blood of a boy with simple Tertian malaria, that is a chill followed by fever, every third day, and quite well in between times. There are two other kinds of malaria, you know."

"Aw gee!" from a deeply troubled Billy, "Have they names as tough as that every-other-day one?"

"Worse, if anything. There is the Quartan, chill and fever every four days as the name implies, and the Estivo-autumnal, fever and chills whenever the germs like, no matter what the poor small boy says, every day or once a week, nothing decently systematic about it. The malaria parasites from the Estivo-autumnal and the Quartan types are a little different from the Tertian, but if you know one, you'll know all, for the polychromatic staining holds good throughout, red blood corpuscle stains pink, protoplasm blue with a red spot in it. As the germs get older they get bigger and bigger, and some-times they break up into lots of small particles. Very nasty little animals, not at all nice company for Billy's, or Wardy's blood."

"Aw, gee, Chief!" Billy blushed, "now you're trying to guy us. But say, you said the bug didn't jump right spang into the middle of the—the corpuscle, so how does he get inside?"

"This way, old man. You and Wardy look at this paper a minute. I am afraid I am boring you terribly, Miss Penrod," with a humorous twinkle in his gray eyes as he spoke the nurse's new nickname. "I realize that your profession knows all about this sort of thing."

"Indeed we don't, General," Miss Penrod cried. "At least I am sure I don't. I'm just like your scouts. I was born in the malaria belt, about Charleston, but nobody ever told

me anything, and at the Hopkins we nurses only pick up a very little of this part of malarial study. Please keep on with that diagram."

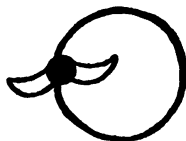
"Why certainly. Now, Billy, you too, Wardy, look! When a malaria mosquito, an Anopheles, sticks his probocis—"

"That's his nose, ain't it, Chief?" from Wardy.

"Yes, or his stinger if you prefer—well, when an Anopheles sticks his probocis into your skin, before he begins to suck he injects into your blood a little creature, or rather quite a lot of little creatures, the sporozoites, and they look something like this



and it promptly makes for the nearest red blood corpuscle it can find and enters it like this—understand?"



"Yessir," from both boys, very much pleased that they did, be it added.

"Little Comeback is in a fair way to become Pasteur Number Two, isn't he, General?" the trained nurse asked.

"Hope so, anyway," the Chief laughed. "But why, Little Comeback?"

"Oh, I forgot. You don't know yet. The Scouts are going to help me at the Allied Bazaar in Charleston, next month, and Wardy is to be one of the boys to sell things—and he is going to dress up as a clown—a sort of Pierrot—white, with big red spots and three huge red buttons, you know, and an Elizabethan ruff, and a little black skull-cap. He was not overly joyful at the idea, just at first, but I won his consent by telling him of a boy at the great Bazaar in Baltimore, who dressed that way and was known as 'Our Little Comeback.' "

"Yes, and they said he wore the littlest hat at the Allied Bazaar," Wardy struck in solemnly, "but I bet mine will be littler, Chief. I'm going to take Miss Penrod up in our garret at the Folly Quarters and we'll root out the things that that Reynold's portrait was painted in. It's in a trunk covered with hide with some of the hair still on it—an awful funny old trunk. Don't you think that will be right nice, Chief?"

"I most certainly do, old fellow," the Assis-

tant Surgeon General agreed heartily, for Warfield's face was very earnest, as if the Chief's opinion would help a lot, if it was favorable. The youngster's next remark showed that it did help mightily.

"Told you so, Billy!" he swaggered. "Told you so!"

"Well, I never said it wasn't nice, did I?" Billy demanded, somewhat ruffled.

"You said you wouldn't be caught dead, dressed up like that," from the triumphant Warfield.

"Well, I wouldn't!" quite shortly from Billy. "It's lots different with you, Wardy. First place, anybody that does know you in Charleston, will say you look just like that great painting by Sir Joshua Reynolds of your ancestor, and the ones that don't know you won't give two hurrahs, anyway. Now, if I rigged up like a clown, every scout in Charleston would say I was a big enough one anyhow, and would just guy the life out of me."

"Well," Wardy grinned, still showing a cheerful disposition to swagger, "that's your tough luck. I'm a good boy, and I'm going to be 'Our Little Comeback' number two, ain't I, Miss Penrod?"

"You certainly are—black skull cap and all."

"Yes'm, and I bet I wear the littlest hat at the Allied Bazaar—won't I Chief?"

"Not a doubt of it, Wardy," from the Assis-

tant Surgeon General, with much gravity. "Billy and I will have to stain it with methyl blue before we can isolate it from the rest of your tow-head and see it under the microscope. Won't we, Billy?"

"Sure," Billy giggled, while Wardy, with a delighted, "Aw, gee!" and a most appreciative grin, trotted outside, to tell his new name to the rest of the Sea Gulls.

"That boy don't care what he says!" Billy laughed (this being one of his pet expressions, you see) "Honest, he don't, Miss Penrod! He just don't care what he says! and he had to ask you and the Chief to make sure his old hat was going to be real little. He's a great old scout, though—gee! What's up out there? Listen?"

The most awful hubbub suddenly smote upon the usual quiet of Camp Ross. Angry voices, a sound as of a heavy stick coming into smart contact with a human head, much scuffling, boyish voices and cries of consternation! A rush of feet, and then Warfield's voice, high and furious:

"You lemme go! Doggone it, lemme go! I—I'll hit you again if you don't quit! Aw, Coonie, gimme that scout staff! Come on, gimme that scout staff, I tell you! I got one of you, anyhow, and I'm glad of it! You lemme go! I—I ain't a bad boy any more! I ain't near as bad as I used to be! You let me

g-go, doggone it! I—I'll bite somebody! Yes I will, too!" then, his voice suddenly filling with big sobs: **"Billy! Billy Hoover! Aw, get Pepper, one of you poor stiffs!"** then in the most heart broken wail that a boy could produce, **"They've got me fellows! Somebody get the Chief! Please!"**

Before half of the above was finished, the Assistant Surgeon General, Billy and the trained nurse at his heels, had hurried from the cabin, colliding with Pepper Sloan, Dr. Jimmy Neems and several other officers, as they all ran for the Scout camp, where the greater part of the troop were gathered in an excited group.

The Sea Gulls, in a compact squad, with their scout staffs held sturdily, glared belligerently at three men who held a scuffling Wardy, his tow head rumpled, his blue eyes blazing, but his round face as white as a dead boy's. Holding the Sea Gulls at bay, for they were as furious at the manhandling of their young leader as boys could be, stood the fat, muscular figure of Coonie Black, his face set with a grim purpose, like a solemn moon, with Van at one elbow, and Ed Blake at the other. To make matters worse, the Sea Gulls being without either their Patrol Leader or his assistant, had set up a howl for "somebody to help us lick those guys!" and who should have responded but the brown-headed Leader of the

Gophers, and his face reflected much of Wardy's anger and some of his fear, too.

"Aw, behave yourselves, can't you?" Coonie grunted, pushing two Sea Gulls back with his scout staff, held at right angles to his body with both hands, "Get on back there! You're nice scouts, aren't you? Hi, Tick-tack!" to one of his own youthful Pussy-cats, "Get Pepper Sloan. Never mind, here comes the Chief! Gee, I'm glad! Now I guess you'll behave yourselves!" and, as a triumphant snigger broke from one of the three men that were holding Wardy, he added, "Well, you needn't get chesty! Our boys would have cleaned you out five minutes ago if Van and Ed and me hadn't stopped them. Being Boy Scouts, we just can't rough-house a Sheriff, even if he is an old—well, never mind what."

"Now, what is all this?" the Assistant Surgeon General said sharply, his eyes as hard as steel, so that both the scouts and the officers of the rural law shuffled nervously. "Go back into quarters at once, boys. Now, what is the trouble? You say one of these men is a Sheriff, Coonie? Well, which one?"

Immediate shouts for the Sheriff, but the only answer being loud cries of the most fearful distress from behind a nearby tree.

"He's over thar, suh!" Henry Bode, for it was he that held Warfield, answered in some

concern. "Et's Pap. He's Sheriff of Dolittle County! I sorter think he's hurted."

"Hurted!" came the bitter reply, as the aged one hobbled forward, weeping most bitterly, "Hurted, Henery? Ye po' fool, I be killed. An' me goin' on eighty-five nex' month! Thet thar highwayman's done resisted the officers o' the law, an' I'll see it goes mighty hard with him."

"What did he do to you, Bode?" the Chief asked, smiling in spite of himself.

"He jest sorter tapped Pap on the haid, suh," the middle-aged "Henery" grinned.

"Well, that's too bad, but I should think that four men could have managed a fourteen year old boy, and not a very big one, at that. What do you want with him?"

"He's 'rested in the name o' the United States Gov'ment," the aged Mr. Bode replied proudly, elbowing "Henery" to one side. "He's 'rested in the name o' the United States Gov'ment, Gen'ral, an' I be the Gov'ment—an' he's 'rested fo' breakin' the Gov'ment's haid, too!"

The Assistant Surgeon General did not laugh this time, but turned slightly white under his tan, and his eyes became worried and distressed.

"On what charge, Bode?" he asked shortly.

"Fo' highwayin' the mail o' the United States Gov'ment at the Postoffice at Dolittle,

last June, Gen'ral. Thar's an accomplice, but we ain't got him, yit."

"Say," the Gopher called in a quick, frightened voice as he strode forward, his lips set manfully. "I—"

"Gopher!" not angrily, but in utter pitiful entreaty from Warfield, "Shut up, please. Please, Chief, what I better do?"

"Go along with the officers to Dolittle, my dear boy, and I will go with you in Van's new Pathfinder. So will Pepper. You will want Billy, too, I know, so he will go, too. Don't you worry. You never even thought of stealing that mail, and we all know it, but it may be a little troublesome just at first. How the dickens did that start, I wonder?"

"Why, that thar young limb's been stealin' hams all the winter, suh," Henry Bode explained.

"Who told you that, man?"

"Henery" looked at Pap, and Pap at once called up what he fondly believed to be a look of the greatest slyness, though in reality it resembled nothing so much as the rolling of an aged sheep's eyes.

"I ain't a'goin' ter tell," he piped.

"Well, don't," from the Chief, resuming his usual urbanity, and gazing down at the aged one from behind the tortoise shell rims of his eyeglasses with much suavity—the black silk

ribbon of the guard alone filled the octogenarian with horrid misgivings as of being in the presence of some creature of a higher world. "Don't tell, my dear Mr. Bode. I can find out so very easily from Washington. Charming place, Washington! A little hard on official blunderers, I have noticed, but quite delightful from a residential standpoint."

"Wardy," spoke up Miss Penrod suddenly, walking up to the boy and laying one hand lovingly on his bowed shoulder, "I want to go with you, too. I want to find out who has been telling tales. We know you never took that mail, dear. Don't be scared, Wardy. I want to be on hand in Dolittle and offer bail for you, so you can go on with your scouting, for the Service needs you boys to help sanitize that camp for the Marine Corps. And I need my Little Comeback for the Bazaar next month. I have nearly a whole year's salary untouched, in my bank in Charleston, and every cent of it is going to go to keep you from being unhappy, honey. It is all my small brother's from now on."

"We will divide whatever expenses may arise, my dear," the Assistant Surgeon General said gently. "Neither you nor I would wish to deprive the other of the real pleasure of showing every one, our boys and the county people, how thoroughly we believe in Wardy's

innocence. Get your hat. Now, we are ready, I think. Your car, Van, my dear boy. Thank you. Gentlemen, we are quite ready to go with you on the most absurd exploit in which it has ever been my misfortune to take part. Gentlemen, lead the way."

CHAPTER XVI.

"This world is a dream, say the old and the wise,
And the rainbows arise o'er the false and the true.
And the mists of the morning are made of our sighs,
Ah! Shatter them, scatter them, Little Boy Blue!"

ALFRED NOYES.

"Cleopatra: . . . I am pale, Charmian.

Charmian: Good madam, keep yourself within yourself.
The man is innocent.

Cleopatra: Some innocents 'scape

death

But not the thunderbolt.

Melt Egypt into Nile! and kindly waters

Turn all to serpents! Call the slave again:

Though I am mad, I will not bite him: call!"

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

"Ah, lazy, dear Tortugas day

Of smoky echoes, blue Gulf's sheen—

Then sing a Service chantey gay,

Hard work, well done at Quarantine."

From "THE SAGA OF AN UNSUNG SERVICE."

THE CHIEF'S PANACEA

Once arrived in the good town of Dolittle,
the Magistrate, with the help of the Assistant
Surgeon General, disposed of the initial in-
dictment very quickly, referring the case to

the grand jury, and asking three thousand dollars bail, which was at once guaranteed by the Chief and Miss Penrod, so Wardy was once more allowed to go and come as he pleased, so long as he did not leave the State of South Carolina.

"Personally," the Chief remarked briskly, the interview with the magistrate finished, "I must run up to Charleston and see the United States District Attorney, as he will of course prosecute the case for the Government, and then I shall probably wire for a few days leave of absence and go to Washington to see the Attorney General, for though heaven knows I do not think that I have a reputation as an official 'wire puller', still, this case is at once too distressing and too absurd to leave any stone unturned. In the meantime, all of you be sure to forget this business entirely and have just the loveliest amount of fun you know how. Wardy, and Billy here, are both pretty good hands at having fun, and," with a twinkle in his gray eyes, "Miss Penrod is not bad at it, either."

"I own to a rather extensive reputation along that line, Chief," Miss Penrod dimpled.

"Say," poor Warfield blurted out, his round face hot and shamed, "who's going to tell Cousin Byrd about this?"

"I am, old fellow," the Chief answered read-

ily, "So don't you worry your tow head about it."

"He—he—he knew about the hams, sir," the boy floundered, his eyes lowered.

"That so? You told him yourself, eh? Well, that makes it all the easier for me. Let—me—see! If it was not for going to the Folly Quarters I would catch that three o'clock train for Charleston. I simply must get the midnight train, at the latest, for Mobile, you know."

"Let me interview Mr. Ravenelle," the trained nurse suggested. "I am not at all worried about him."

"It would be so much easier for you, if his sight was perfect, my dear Miss Penrod," the Assistant Surgeon General smiled, looking pleasantly at the girl's pretty face.

Miss Penrod blushed and dropped an old fashioned curtsey.

"That is just lovely of you, General," she laughed, "but we will do the best we can anyway. You take the train for Charleston, and 'Our Little Comeback' and I will go to the Folly Quarters and do our bit. *Vae Victis!*"

"Oh, by all means," the Assistant Surgeon General laughed. "Good luck to you both! Don't be worried, Wardy-scout, for everything will come right, and be sure not to forget to make fun your life's business for the next week or so. Also, as Senior Patrol Leader of our Troop, get the boys out on the site for the

Marine Corps camp and tell Iron and Neems that I say to let Lake White, or even Hollis himself, help you as well as Pepper. There is a good bit left to oil, as well as to drain, and you can also help to locate further breeding places for mosquitoes, and thereby assist the engineers to finish their sanitary survey. Of course the men will do most of the ditching. That concrete-lined central ditch for a watershed is finished, you know. Try to push the other scouts so that the work will be done as quickly as possible. Oil wherever you can. Flag the ponds or even the holes that you prefer an officer to see first, and do your field work carefully, carefully."

"Yessir," very briskly from the tow-headed Wardy. "Gee, there's a lot to do, but I don't care! Bet you we'll hear that old Marine Corps bugle ringing out to make you feel good, before you know it, Chief."

"Good for you, Wardy," the Assistant Surgeon General smiled, "Now, remember, work, and make the others work, but attend to every detail yourself, old man. Never leave the details to someone else. Your position in the Troop puts a good deal of responsibility on you, you know."

"Yessir," Warfield answered, flashing a purposeful, happy grin up at his Chief with a most business-like squaring of his shoulders. "I'll

make the fellows work, and I'll work my own self."

"Good scout!" the Assistant Surgeon General said. "See you all in a few days," and he walked up the one street of Dolittle, Miss Penrod at his side, leaving the boys in the car.

"You have more sense!" the nurse italicized admiringly, as they entered the shabby railroad station. "That small boy is already so busily full of sanitary plans for his field work that his tow head has absolutely no room for personal worries."

The Chief smiled, his face, lean and clever and gracious, showing fatigue for the first time.

"Oh, my dear young lady," he said simply, "Work is my particular panacea, my official cure-all for every worry under the sun. Interesting work, of course. Good-bye, and good luck with Mr. Ravenelle! If he wishes to guarantee that bail and make the amount up to us, of course we must let him do so, for it is his right as Wardy's guardian, but I do not think he can, by any chance, afford so large a sum of money. That magistrate must think our rolly-polly tow-head is a second 'Gyp the Blood' to require such bail. Well, here comes my train, tobacco juice, infected plush cushions and all, so once again, good-bye, and good luck to you, dear Florence Nightingale. Good-bye."

CHAPTER XVII.

"Said she: 'The pride upon me grates
Of Gwyndolin and Gladdys Gates!'

'I will,' she added with a frown,
'Call Gwyndolin and Gladdys down!' "

GUY WHETMORE CARROLL.

"It was wicked bad campaigning (cheap and nasty from
the first)

There was heat and dust and coolie-work and sun,
There were vipers, flies and sandstorms, there was cholera
and thirst,

But Pharoah done the best he ever done.
Down the desert, down the railway, down the river,
Like Israelites from bondage so they came,
'Tween the clouds o' dust and fire, to the land of his desire,
And his Moses, it was Sergeant Whatisname."

RUDYARD KIPLING.

"Service Engineers are we,
Drab Utilitarians—
Woe worn tones from land and sea
Call us Sanitarians."
From "THE SAGA OF AN UNSUNG SERVICE."

FIELD WORK

Work! Everywhere over a three mile
stretch, in forest and on clearing, busy men,
busy boys! A grass choked creek is being
opened, so that the water may clean away the

many pools that now contain still back-water, and there seems to be a regular battle, a sort of second Salamis, between the men and boys on one hand, and a pitiless, copper red sun, on the other. Wardy, patient, in spite of his natural pugnacity, cheers and lifts his scouts along in the hard work, in a spirit worthy of his world famous Chief himself, his round small body dripping with sweat and dirt, his mouth either set sturdily, when he begins to feel he is "getting mad", or widened in a most friendly grin, as he jokes with the rest. It is four days since the Assistant Surgeon General has left for Charleston to see the United States District Attorney, and, after a rush for Mobile, he has wired Dr. Jimmy Neems, his chief of staff, that he is en route for Washington, and the Attorney General's office.

As to the interview between the trained nurse and Mr. Byrd Ravenelle, it was, you may be sure, most friendly and amicable, for the two weaknesses in the old gentleman's hard nature were, first, his love of money—satisfied by the guarantee of Warfield's bail by the girl and the Assistant Surgeon General—and, secondly, his veneration of good, colonially blue blood, equally well satisfied by this visit from "a Virginia Page and a Charleston Sewell." He appeared terribly shocked about Wardy, though, as he explained at great length, the boy having already told him of the

ham theft, he was not surprised. What angered Miss Penrod mightily, though, was that he said he could not feel sure that 'his dear boy' was innocent of the mail robbery, but that he hoped and prayed he was, and that the law would find out the truth.

Flushed and indignant, but under the wonderful control of her profession, the girl returned to her friend at the Mill hospital at Dottle, and Warfield to Camp Ross, and things resumed much of their old shape. Thus was the final work on the new site for the training camp for the Navy Department begun again, with Wardy working as he had never done before, showing a vigor and earnestness, together with a sturdy determination to keep his temper and make good, that filled his youthful sponsor, Billy Hoover, with pride, and which left the cheerful Pepper little short of ecstatic.

"He's the spunkiest, most industrious little chap," the scout master bragged, as he and Lake White and Mr. Hollis swung along the low bank of Bull Creek toward Sago, "that I ever saw! Something of a buccaneer, but good stuff in him, lots and lots of it."

"Yes," from Mr. Hollis, "and let me add, I think my small cousin, Billy, excavated the biggest part of that good stuff, with a precision that might have delighted poor, dead Gaillard, had he not been called from his great Culebra cut work, for God's tasks in Heaven.

Wardy, from the first, would have rejoiced mightily in storming a second Nombre de Dios with Sir Henry Morgan and his murderous crew, but Billy has laid the foundation of a sweetness, a tolerance in the turbulent, plump heart of our tow-head, that is an echo, albeit a faint one, of his own, brave, gracious fun-loving young breast. Eh, Pepper?"

"Right-o, Mr. Hollis!" Pepper assented soberly. "All honor to Billy Hoover for the big hearted, kindly little gentleman that he always is. So say we all, eh Lake?"

"Certainly, old man," from Lake White. "But did you ever see boys work and hustle so? It's—oh, blame it all, man, it's downright inspiring! Look at that smelly black water. That's Van with the oil spray. Got heaps of sense, for a fifteen-year-old, Van has."

"Right," Pepper assented heartily, "and I'm glad all over. Why, when I first knew that boy, he made me feel disgusted, and then grim—honestly he did. I always thought of Kipling's old fellow talking to his son. Remember?"

"I've paid for your sickest fancy, I've humored your crackedest whim.

Dick, it's your daddy dyin', you've got to listen to him.'"

"Me, too, Pepper," Mr. Hollis interrupted, "and the part that got to me closest was that if the good old Senator had been dying in those

days, well, Van wouldn't have cared any more than Kipling's Dickey did. But now, what a difference! Hello, Billy! How's the work?" as the scout trotted up, bare-legged, energetic and most cheerfully bristling as to his golden head.

"Fine, Cousin Frank," he answered, wiping the perspiration from his face with one arm. "We've done just what Wardy said, worked from the central, concrete drainage ditch upward toward the highlands, so we can stop when we find plenty of pools that are not breeding skeeters. Gee, but old Wardy makes us sweat, though!"

"Bosses you, does he?" Mr. Hollis laughed.

"He sure does, but he's as square as—as—"

"As Billy Hoover," Pepper Sloan struck in with a smile.

Billy flushed up to his ears.

"Oh, I say—I—I—Well, that's pretty nice of you to say that, old Scout Master," he floundered, pleased and tremendously touched, but most awfully embarrassed, boy-like. "Well, Wardy is mighty square with us, anyhow, so there! He never tells the rest of us to do a thing, ditching, wading into a pool or anything, that he won't do himself, same as he tells us. He's a cracker-jack!"

"I ain't no such thing! I'm a dirty kid, and I'm a bad boy!" Warfield grinned as he strode up, bare footed like Billy, but wet to his thighs,

so that his khaki pants clung to his round hard limbs like the skin under them. "Quit throwing bouquets, Billy-Billy, 'cause it won't help you to get out of any work. Oh, no! See those four red flags, Mr. Hollis? Well, they mark the only ponds we scouts aren't men enough to either oil or drain or fill in. They ought to be drained, I think."

"Oh, you do, do you?" Mr. Hollis laughed. "And pray why, Master Wardy?"

"Well," sturdily from Wardy, meeting the Sanitary Engineer's eyes squarely, "they all sort of slope toward the central ditch, you see, and so it would be ever so easy to cut drainage to that, and it would be just silly to oil them in that case, now wouldn't it, suh?"

"Of course it would, old man," Mr. Hollis agreed. "Draining is the best permanent cure, when you can do it without too great an expense. Come, Pepper, you and Lake and I must look at these same flag stations."

Billy had already gone back to the pond by this time, where some six or seven other scouts were wading about searching for breeding places for Anopheles, and Wardy was about to follow him, when he heard his name called and, looking round, saw Pap Bode hobbling toward him, looking smaller and more shrunk-en than ever, and very forlorn.

"Oh, Master Wardy, Master Wardy," the old fellow piped, a break in his thin voice,

"Master Warfield—don't go an' turn we all out, suh."

"Huh?" from Warfield, "What you mean?"

"Why—I—I—I be an ole man, Master Wardy," Pap Bode shivered, the scanty, hard tears of old age rolling down his face, "I—I be sech an ole man—an' I've been a-livin' heah fo' sixty year most—an'—an' Henery an' his Jim will wok fo' you hard; so—so fo' Gord's sake, Master Wardy, don' be turnin' of us off the Folly Quarters! Yo' Daddy wouldn't never a' done sech, nor yo' Grandad neither."

Wardy's mouth quivered a little, and his eyes filled with big, boyish tears, as he lifted his round, tanned face toward the old man's.

"I don't want to turn you out, Pap," he said a bit huskily, "B-but Cousin Byrd says—you—you don't pay very well, not regular you know, and—and, aw, gee! Don't you cry! I'll go ask Cousin Byrd to let you stay on the place, honest I will! I—I'll just beg him, ever so, you see if I don't! He's—he's mad with me right now, b-but I'll try to keep you on the Folly Quarters for all that. Papa liked you first rate, and so did Grand-dad, and well, I'm a Brown, too, and I'll do everything I can. Say, I'm ever so sorry I broke your head that time you arrested me."

"Ef you jest don' break my heart, Master Wardy, I reckon my po' fool ole haid kin stan' et," Pap smiled piteously, and Warfield

returned the smile with a friendly, if rather shaky, grin. Then they shook hands, after which the old fellow hobbled off to the mule he had ridden over on, and Wardy, with a quick chivalry that was at last finding expression in all his acts, scout-like, trotted by his side and helped him to mount and stood, his tow head bared to the breeze that ruffled it, till the old man had ridden off, his blue-gray eyes big and starry as he looked after the shabby figure on the mule.

"Good work, Scout!" came the pleased, cheerful voice of Billy Hoover, as he walked up, wiping his dirty wet hands on his pants. "Say, is he after you again about breaking the 'United States Gov'ment's haid', Wardy?" and he laughed his jolly, boy's laugh.

"No, he isn't," Wardy replied, smiling up at the bigger boy. "He's in all sorts of trouble. Say, Billy-Billy, you're the only kid I know that laughs and grins inside as well as out. You're more fun! Gee!"

"What's wrong with Pap?" Billy laughed, though he blushed a little, too, and Wardy at once told him all about it.

"It's partly 'cause Cousin Byrd wants to get rid of the Gopher," he explained quite unhappily, "'cause he and me stole that ham. You see, Gopher lives with the Bodes now-a-days. Oh, Billy, Cousin Byrd has been acting—just awful! He—he knew all about the ham, from

the first, but you mustn't ever tell that, not even to the Chief, 'cause I gave him my word of honor I'd never tell anyone. When me and Gopher first asked him about it, before there was any Camp Ross, he always said no, 'cause we'd pay the folks back after we'd cleared the mortgage on the Folly Quarters, by selling that timber on the Big Bear river. Now, though, he believes I stole that mail bag, he says he does, and I don't know what to do."

"If he knew you were taking that ham all the time, he ought to be licked," Billy flared indignantly. "As to your taking the mail, he just can't believe a thing like that!"

"He says he belives it, all the same," Warfield replied, "and it's just awful. There's a reward of \$1,500.00 for the capture of that mail thief, and—and Cousin Byrd says I'm the first Warfield Brown to ever have a Federal reward placed on his head for theft. Says he don't see how I can look that Reynold's portrait boy in the face, there in the study."

"Who told on you about the ham and started all this?" Billy cried belligerently. "If I knew—I'd punch his head for him."

"I don't know who told—I can't think," Wardy sighed, "But whoever did it has just about finished me. If it wasn't for you, Billy—and the Scouts,—I'd like to be a dead boy. Now I've got to go to Cousin Byrd and beg him to let the Bodes stay on the Folly Quarter

land, and he's just sure to say it's 'cause I want to take up for Gopher, and get into more badness. I'm pretty sick right now at the idea of asking him."

"Say," Billy brightened up suddenly, "Why don't you ask Miss Penrod to help you? She's not one bit scared of Mr. Ravenelle. She's a Virginia Page and a Charleston Sewell, you know!"

"Yep!" Wardy assented, somewhat cheered, "But you're a Charleston Prendergast yourself, and I never saw much love from Cousin Byrd to you, Billy. Still," a faint grin on his lips, "you've got Yankee blood in your body, too, through the Hollises, and Cousin Byrd just hates the Yankees! I'll ask Miss Penrod to help me, Billy, that's just what I'll do, and she'll do it, 'cause she's so nice, and she's your second cousin, too, and that makes her nicer, old scout. Honest it does!" and, comforted and greatly heartened, he and Billy raced once more to the pond and began an energetic use of the knapsack oil spray, sending a film of oil over the surface of the water, and, be it added, over several indignant brother scouts as well.

CHAPTER XVIII.

"Au clair de la lune,
Mon ami Pierrot,
Prête-moi ta plume
Pour écrire un mot.
Ma chandelle est morte,
Je n'ai plus de feu,
Ouvre-moi ta porte,
Pour l'amour de Dieu."

FRENCH FOLK SONG.

"Why did the harp string break?
I tried to force a note that was beyond its power, that
is why the harp string is broken."

RABINDRANATH TAGORE

"We've a real plantation house,
At our station sleeping there.
In that reservation house
Watch us boys a-creeping there.
'Neath the eaves we find Her fan,
Tiny shoes She used of yore—
Havoc played with heart of man,
Ebon'd brows like old Japan,
Small, gay mouth, and pompadore."
From "THE SAGA OF AN UNSUNG SERVICE."

PIERROT

True to Billy's advice and to his own desires,
Warfield Brown went over to Dolittle that
same evening and, with an expression

of gloomy solemnity, talked over his troubles with his friend, Anne Page, R. N.

"The surest way to the heart of that guardian of yours, always provided that he has one," Miss Penrod said briskly, "is to appeal to one of his hobbies, either money or genealogy. Personally I can't very well use the former, Wardy, and neither can you, but cheer up, for we are gloriously fitted for the latter, you being a South Carolina Brown, and a South Carolina Warfield too, and I a Virginia Page and a Charleston Sewell, so Billy tells me. On my word of honor, I had forgotten it myself, thank goodness!" and she grinned.

"I—I know Cousin Byrd loves good families, Miss Penrod," Wardy sighed, "but honest, I don't see how we can make that help us in getting him to let the Bodes stay on the Folly Quarters' land. He already knows I'm a South Carolina Brown and a Warfield, yes'm, and a Ravenelle, too—but he don't seem to be so awful crazy about me, now that there's a reward for me."

"I could box your young ears, Wardy," Miss Penrod interrupted, "for talking like that. There is no reward offered for you—that fifteen hundred dollars is for the capture of the mail thief. That isn't you."

"No ma'am, but Cousin Byrd seems to think it is. If I could only get him in a good humor so he'd sort of like me a little bit, I wouldn't

be so scared to ask him to let the Bodes stay, but as it is he'll say I want to help Gopher, and then I bet you anything I get mad, and, between the two of us, we'll raise billy-blue-hill. Wish that silly old ancestor of mine, the first Warfield Brown, you know, would quit haunting his own bed-room, and would sort of whisper to Cousin Byrd that I'm a nice old Warfield Brown my own self, and ever so much like the rest of the family and so he ought to be good to me, for the honor of the Brown-Warfield-Ravenelle name. He's so crazy about family traditions and that sort of stuff."

"My dear Wardy," Miss Penrod cried, clapping her hands in triumph, "You have said it! We'll do it. The sooner, the better."

"Do what, Miss Penrod?" Wardy demanded, puzzled, but excited too.

"Call up the spirit of the first Warfield Brown, of Colonial days, to help us. And our Little Comeback will aid us too. Now do you understand?"

"No, I don't," rather crossly from Wardy.

"Heaven help this child!" Miss Penrod dimpled. "Now listen. We'll go right over to the Folly Quarters after supper, to-night, and we'll climb up to that garret, root out the old lavender contents of that hair trunk, and dress you up as for the Allied Bazaar, as Pierrot, after the portrait by the great Sir Joshua Reynolds—black skull cap and all; and a most

ravishing Pierrot you will make. Then down we will go to the study and see if your old-world appearance won't delight Mr. Ravenelle as an echo of your illustrious ancestral past."

"Aw gee!" Wardy grinned, his face lightening up all over. "That's great! Cousin Byrd will be tickled silly, he's crazy about that portrait by Reynolds, and I bet he'll listen to Pierrot right enough."

After supper, therefore, these two friends, boy and girl, galloped over from the village toward the Folly Quarters, hurrying in order to reach the plantation before a rapidly gathering thunder storm. By the time they had swung into the yard and entered the back of the house, through Mammy Lou's kitchen, and had stolen upstairs to the garret, the great mass of black and dun-colored clouds had rolled over the entire sky, and tongues of forked lightning, as crooked and harsh as Mr. Ravenelle's smile, were cutting a pitiless path from the heavens to the steaming earth, being followed by tumbling detonations of thunder.

In the high panelled gloom of the big study, the gaunt, silk-robed figure of the old man sat, the faintest possible smile on his lips.

"What a perfectly charming night," he muttered in his lovely voice, leaning over the ancient rosewood table. "What a fascinating night. Every one of Wardy's tow hairs is doubtless standing up on his head like the

pugnacious, plump porcupine that he is. The dear boy does not at all like thunder storms. Fancy being out in tents in this rain! Also fancy preferring a Service tent at such a time to a roof! Droll, but deliciously boylike! Wardy, in spite of his good blood, seems to have just a touch of the bourgeois about him, or he would never fraternize with those scouts. Dear me, what a pleasant thought it is, especially to a doting old guardian like myself, to know that in a month or two, after the trial, the dear little brown-skinned tow-head will always be safe under a nice, watertight roof—in a reformatory! Pleasant, quite! What a solemn, helpless young calf it is! Keeps on worrying and wondering who told on him about the hams, and so started the other trouble. He! he! So subtle, oh dear me, so charmingly subtle! Equal to that roly-poly Hoover boy. Gad, I'd like to bite that white-skinned urchin! So officious! Wardy could have helped me, oh, in really big things, if that boy had not appeared on the scene. Wardy has the makings of a most artistic thief, only he lacks the roguery! Lots of animal courage, though, and he was progressing most engagingly, the dear child! Yes, a clean cut imprint of teeth on Master Billy's white shoulder would be an exquisite satisfaction. It is too much trouble, of course, and by no means worth the risk, but I should greatly enjoy see-

ing that big, husky fourteen-year-old cry. It is almost the best thought I have ever had—next to my blindness! That was lovely! A blind old fellow is so touching. Why, that freckled-faced, red-headed young officer actually had tears of sympathy in his eyes the first time he met me. He was so sorry for me, and he did not attempt to hide his emotions of pity, for of course an old blind fellow could not by any chance see his boyish distress. I declare it was as good as a play! A blind man could not see tears, nor see to steal, either. Softly, softly! Gad, how that lightning curses the earth!”

A great shoot of rain-tossed wind flung in through the open window at the farther end of the room, sending the white curtains billowing before it so that the big reading lamp on the table flared dangerously. Mr. Ravenelle swore very softly at the wind and the lamp simultaneously, lowered the latter a trifle, and then, unlocking a deep drawer at the bottom of the table, a sort of small bin, pulled something out of it and laid it on the table; then screamed, for a heavy whip of storm-wind entered the room with a rush and, mingling with the scream was the crash of a falling object as the huge, gorgeous canvas of Sir Joshua Reynolds fell from its old fastenings and, frame and all, tumbled to the floor. The lamp went out with a sickening stench, only the crumbling sparks

around the wick glowing a little and, in a vivid, cruelly white flash of spurting lightning, from the wreckage of gilded frame and canvas, there stepped the stolid figure of the Pierrot, ridiculous baggy clown's suit, tufted slippers, red spotted, pajama-like clothes, huge red buttons, stiff neck-ruff and all; the tiny black skull cap still cocked waggishly on the back of the tow head, over one ear.

In that one flash, before the dark that followed it, the big, blue-gray eyes of the little clown had fastened squarely on the old man's, and the latter's eyes filled with horror and panic as his small, yellow hands clutched at the open contents of the thing that lay before him on the table—a soiled canvas mail sack, out of which a mass of letters, some registered, tumbled in confusion. Then, as the dark closed in, another scream, and with a speed almost incredible, Warfield's guardian had sprung to his feet and rushed from the room and out into the storm, the heavy front doors of the Folly Quarters crashing after him. Then stillness, only the echoes of the man's scream, and of the heart-stopping thunder outside. Then the window was closed and the lamp re-lit, showing the set, pale face of the trained nurse bending over the littered table, and the motionless figure of a small Pierrot, his face wet and ghastly in the bizarre absurdity of his clown's

motley. Wetting his lips with the tip of his moist tongue, the small scout spoke at last.

"Cousin Byrd," he said, a break in his young voice, "Cousin Byrd, I—I didn't mean to scare you. The—the wind blew the portrait down and—and the canvas hit me and knocked me down under it, so I had to crawl out right from the frame. You—" Then he stopped for he realized that no one was in the room but himself and the nurse.

"Come here, Wardy," the girl said in a low, steady voice. "Oh, my poor, dear, tried little boy—look! Here is the mail thief! See, dear? See the bag still with its postal order for Washington tied to it. Here is the opened registered letter of last June, addressed to Senator Cubb, and here are the ten one hundred dollar bills. And—ah, what is it, Wardy?" and she put an arm about the tough small body and drew the scout to her side, his tow head bowed grievously over her hand.

"Look, please!" the boy cried, a big sob breaking from him. "See? This—this letter from the Postmaster General—oh, see, Miss Penrod! It—it thanks Cousin Byrd for—for detecting the thief and—and it incloses a check for fifteen hundred dollars as a reward, and it—aw, gee!—it praises him for—for telling on a thief, even though it was one of his own flesh and blood. I—oh, I always tried to do what he said—I promised mother I would when I

was a little boy, and he—he tried to—to make a thief out of me to get me sent to prison, or something, and—and,” but his eyes filled and his voice broke, as a great wave of boyish anger swept over him, moving all his other emotions before it.

A clatter of swiftly galloping hoofs past the windows and, in another spurt of white lightning from the hurrying clouds the gaunt figure of the old man, bent far over the pommel of his saddle as he swept out with the rushing of the storm on Warfield's beloved Beauty Horse, and from the calm gracious dignity of the Folly Quarters forever, leaving a flushed, horrified Boy Scout (only Pierrot to his firm skin) holding tightly to the hand of a trained nurse, his round face damp with sweat and as white as chalk under the rollicking little black skull cap so waggishly set on the back of his fluffy tow head, somewhat over one ear.

CHAPTER XIX.

"Thus will I listen and lie so still,
And watch like a guard o'er the forces;
Until the roaring of cannon I hear
The tramp of the neighing horses.
'Twill mean that my Emperor rides o'er my grave,
The sabres flash and rattle.
Then, armed to the teeth will I rise from the grave
For my Emperor, my Emperor to battle!"
TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN OF HEINRIK HEINE.

"There stands Fort Jefferson
(Billy told me, Billy told me.)
Pirates there their life begun.
(Honest, Billy told me!)"
From "THE SAGA OF AN UNSUNG SERVICE."

A BOY SCOUT AND A COPPER MOON

"I don't know how you feel about this, Reggie, but I think it's pretty tough!"

The storm that had shut out Mr. Ravenelle from the Folly Quarters forever, was also beating on a pair of tents pitched on the right hand bank of Bull creek, where Sago tumbled into it, swelling it to twice its former size. The above remark was flung from a squatting, sulky-faced Billy Hoover as he pulled his khaki

coat from a tent fastening and cuddled it over his olive drab shoulders. There were four occupants to the small tent, three scouts and a crow, named Mehitabel, an aged, ill-natured bird with a bad repute, the mascot of the Sea Gull Patrol, in lieu of a proper bird of that name. Just now Mehitabel's temper, never of the best, was made worse by the fact that she was very damp, and as cheerful Pepper had waggishly thrown out dark hints about a fowl of her age being subject to rheumatism, the boys were much worried about her.

"It's c-cold, sort of," Billy continued with a shiver, "Don't you think so, Reggie?"

Reginald Bolton, one of the Sea Gulls, wriggled his slim body under his one blanket and chuckled.

"You ain't got a soul to thank for our being out here on Sago, but your own chubby self, Billy-Billy," he said promptly. "Why couldn't we three kids and poor old Mehitabel, be back at Camp Ross with the other fellows, you, Van and I, 'stead of playing 'ducky-daddle-puddle-pond' out here in these squashy lowlands?"

"Well, I like that!" Billy flung back, much aggrieved, "I certainly do like that, Reggie Bolton! Weren't you the first one of the troop to volunteer to stay up here on Sago with Dr. Neems and Pepper Sloan to be ready to meet the U. S. Marines under Colonel Kemp if they

should by any chance get here before to-morrow? Weren't you, Reggie? Weren't you?"

"Sure I was," a bit sheepishly from Reggie. "But I never thought Dr. Neems would call my bluff, and, anyway, old Wardy would have wanted some of his Sea Gulls to be on hand for a big time like the coming of two companies of Marines, even if most of them are Rookies. And then Billy," quite plaintively, "it would have been nice and jolly in this little old tent, if Mehitabel and me had had it to ourselves, without you and Van butting in. Honest, it's too little for the four of us."

"Huh!" Billy grunted, as the aged bird, with a troubled croke, bit the lobe of his left ear peevishly. "The armory in Charleston wouldn't be big enough for old Mehitabel when she gets a grouch on like now."

From the furthest corner came the voice of Van Lear, drowsily begging the other boys to "shut up." Then he went fast to sleep again.

All three scouts were on a good-sized pallet made of pine boughs, a very nice bed when cut dry, but a most cheerless affair when, as now, it is damp. Each boy had a blanket and, minus shoes and stockings and coats, but otherwise dressed, they had curled up close together with their arms around one another to get warm, like small bear cubs. Van and Reggie got along famously, but Billy, being nearest the tent flap, got a certain amount of rain on

him, and besides that, being a roly-poly scout, you know, he needed more blanket than the other two; but, sad to say, he got less, for the slim Reggie, who was in the middle, was not content to cuddle warmly against Van's body, on one side and Billy's on the other, but succeeded by certain masterly maneuvers, to pull the irate Billy's blanket from off him and snuggle down beneath it with a gentle sigh that produced horrid desires for murder on the part of the shivering Assistant Patrol Leader of the Sea Gulls. It was as a very last resort, therefore, that he had unloosed Reggie's right arm from about his neck and had squatted down sullenly at the side of the pallet, his scout coat slung over his shoulders, Mehitabel nipping viciously at his bare feet every now and then.

From the next tent, close at hand, came men's voices.

"Pepper, my dear soul," in the jocose tones of Surgeon Jimmy Neems, "Arise! Réveille toi, belle endormie! A lizard, at least I think it is a lizard, is playing tag up and down my official spine. I wish it removed, Pepper."

"Not so you'd know it, old son," in cheerful response from the youngest officer. "I've troubles of my own, thank you. Something damp and feathery fell right on my stomach just now, and I rather fancy it is our pet, the chaste Mehitabel, from next door. It hurts."

"Did it have claws, Pepper?" from Dr. Neems.

"Yes, it did. Sort of scaley ones."

Dr. Neems chuckled.

"Poor Pepper! Poor tummy! Poor scaley claws! Poor Mehitabel, dear, dear old soul!" he soliloquized, then quite peevishly, "Drat that lizard!"

"Oh, by all means!" in happy accents from Pepper. "Say, Dr. Neems, I think Sago is rising from its banks. Wouldn't it be a lark if we woke up and found ourselves doing a Mary-go-and-call-the-cattle-home stunt, floating a-down Bull creek en route for the good river Edisto? Tell Spot-to I died bravely, with a prayer of forgiveness for Mehitabel on my lips."

"Ha! ha!" with gusto from the bald-headed Jimmy Neems, "Spot-to, your granny! Who would break the news to those nearer and dearer, down Dolittle way, my Elf?"

"Who do you mean, Dr. Neems?" Pepper demanded huskily, a deep pink sweeping over his freckled face.

"Names never mentioned, my dear boy," the playful Neems grinned with relish, "but what are the initials for Royal Navy, eh, Pepper?"

The young man made no reply, but glaring through the darkness, he brutally muttered the one word "Evelyn", and Dr. Neems winced.

Pepper at once felt comforted, hugging his bare arms close to the hard muscles of his athletic body joyfully.

"Say, Doctor," he asked pleasantly, "were you ever more uncomfortable than this?"

"Only once, at Fort San Lorenzo, on the Isthmus," Jimmy Neems replied, "when Frank Hollis dropped the evaporated cream can over the side of our dug-out cajuca, and we watched it as it sank in the waters of the Chagres. It was our last can, you know. It was raining just about as it is now. Wonder how those boys next door are faring?"

"Don't know," from Pepper, then quite happily, "They must be as wretched as we, don't you think?"

"More so, if anything," very graciously from Dr. Neems. "Just listen to them, will you! Our gentle-hearted Billy scout is mad all over. Since she seems to have quit us, probably Mehitabel is misbehaving."

"Say," very indignantly from Billy Hoover, "I stuck my arm out just now and Mehitabel bit me. Drew blood, too. If she comes inside I'm going to leave her with you and Van and go for a hike. The clouds are beginning to break, and I can see the big, old, round moon. It's as red as copper. Gee, it's pretty!"

Mehitabel insisted on entering the boys' tent, so, true to his decision, Billy rose with a grunt, and strode out.

The great masses of storm clouds were scudding swiftly before a strong wind and much of the sky was now open. The moon, full and round, was just peeping over the tops of the pines, sending long, ghostly shadows everywhere, and smiling on the wet scout as it elongated his shadow at great length.

"Gee," he grinned, "If I was as nice and skinny as that I'd be tickled silly. Well, I'm not as fat as Coonie Black, anyhow. Wonder how a sentry feels on a wet night like this? Think I'll walk up and down and play I'm one, over in France."

Suiting the action to the word, he began to pace up and down a bit of clearing crossing and recrossing a bridle path. By the time the boy had marched back and forth a dozen or so times, his body held very straight, he began to feel as solemn as if the entire fate of Verdun rested on his young shoulders, and, filled with Buster's many tales of the trenches, he became so warm with bellicose emotions that he doubled up his tough fists and growled out an "A bàs, les Prussiens," at regular intervals, quite like the most ferocious 'poilu'. More gradually his small heart was obsessed with the idea that to his faithful keeping was entrusted the entire French Republic, and he began not only to march but to watch carefully every moon distorted object that confronted his wide open eyes, humming softly under his

breath: " 'Allons enfants de la Patrie' " very much in dead earnest. Big, husky fourteen-year-old though he was, he was still very good at "let's play," was Billy. The gnarled roots of a lonely live oak became the blood smeared bodies of French Currassiers, the low drooping Spanish moss, the beards of faithful Russian Cossacks, the tall symmetry of the pines the advancing of a Uhlan host, menacing and terrible, knives in teeth, sabres pointed, one and all, at his deep, quickly heaving breast. Gently the golden fluff of his crisp hair began to bristle even more briskly than usual, and his lips parted to admit his short, panting breaths. So many dead French boys all around him! So hopelessly tired, those staunch, grizzled Cossacks! And all, all depending solely on one Boy Scout to give the word of warning, and fire the shot of alarm from the muzzle of the hickory gun that rested so purposefully on his shoulder.

An owl hooted dismally, and Billy shaking a fist in the direction of the noise, muttered grimly that von Hindenburg's voice was at last heard.

A cold, velvety soft muzzle was suddenly snuggled against his smooth, pink cheek and this sturdy defender of France felt his heart tumbling over and over against his ribs. One thought, dreadful, shaming and self accusatory flashed through his mind—the Uhlans had out-

flanked him and had come up from behind. Then, coming down to earth, he recognized Wardy's Beauty Horse, with empty saddle, her gentle eyes gazing at him quietly, and the boy grinned very sheepishly as he patted her nose, the idea entering his head at once that Wardy must have ridden back to camp and not have fastened her securely. Then a brilliant idea came to him.

"Beauty Horse," he whispered in her ear as he kissed her soft muzzle lovingly, "You liked to scared me to death, honest you did. Now you're here, though, I'm going to use you for a mount. We'll play I'm a Currassier, Beauty, and you're my faithful horse, who'll follow me on the battle field, and—and kiss my c-cold face w-with your m-muzzle when I'm all stiff and bleeding and dead. I ought to be bloody now. Oh, I know what!" and he pressed the small wounds left from his encounter with the irate Mehitabel and wiped the blood off on his soft cheek, feeling most glorious, and sad, too—it was all for France—death, blood, wounds and all.

Climbing to the saddle, the boy folded his arms and became again silent and watchful, a round, stalwart young figure in his wet campaign shirt and scout hat, his khaki clad legs hugging the saddle closely, his body hunched forward. A tiny crackle, and he jumped. A whip-o'-will's call, and he shivered. The Prus-

sian lines, strange to say, seemed no nearer. He tried to remember Napoleon's address to his army, translated with much despair at school a year before, but could get no further than the initial "Soldats!" so he gave it up at last and, wheeling on the faithful Russian hosts, rose up in his stirrups and hurled the major portion of Lincoln's Gettysburg address at them, no doubt greatly edifying those silent gray-beards.

But they were coming nearer, those German Uhlans! Billy, his eyes big and wide, his smooth jaws set, his whole body and soul under the witchery of his boy's imagination and the elfin spell of the copper moon above him, with the great masses of storm clouds piled high on the horizon, rose again in his stirrups, waved his sabre (a moment ago the trusty gun) and charged down the path toward those oncoming hordes, frightened, but most wonderfully exalted, shouting at the top of his young voice Buster's French phrases, so dear to the hearts of all the Camp Ross scouts. Galloping like a golden-headed whirlwind, lifting himself higher and higher in his stirrups, his wooden sword swinging high above his crisp, bristling hair, his head thrown back, the sweat streaking his pink and white face as he called his defiance, his voice young and high and very boyish.

"Chargez vous, mes enfants! Mes soldats! A bas, les Prussiens!" and horse and rider dashed up the bridle path in a silver highway of moonlight, and straight into the arms of two companies of much astounded Marines.

CHAPTER XX.

"No more surveying with an eye impartial
The long line of the coast,
Shall the gaunt figure of our old Field Marshall
Be seen along his post."

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW.

"So lay aside the blue and gilt,
The Full Dress of gold tissued toys;
Hand on the shovel, from the hilt
Of sword, for busy Service boys.

Good-bye, my camp; Good-night, Good-bye!
Grassy choked river, swamp and fenn—
Work always waits, Scouts—God's on high
To love His boys, turned Service men."
From "THE SAGA OF AN UNSUNG SERVICE."

THE CALL

"Strike tents!"

Out rang the clear cut order from Pepper Sloan, four days after Billy's adventure with the in-coming Marines, and, a second later, in Navy style, came back the answer in the boyish voices of the three Patrol Leaders, Wardy, Coonie and the Gopher, "Strike tents, sir!"

Rolls of smoothly packed duffle stood about in the early morning sunshine, its sparkle no brighter than the twenty-four pair of young eyes that danced with excitement at the prospect of a trip to Charleston and the Great Allied Bazaar. The troop was to hike over to Dolittle in the morning, and take the train from there to Charleston.

After striking the tents, they were packed away carefully in Cookie's cabin, along with the folding cots and all kit, except what was needed in the rolls of duffle. Then came another order from Pepper:

"Scoot for a bath, Scouts!"

"Scoot for a bath, sir!" from the grinning Patrol Leaders as the whole troop scampered for the swimming hole, stripping as they ran, their young Scout Master reaching the spot first and diving into the water in a curved, glistening flash of white, and, his red head coming to the surface, he struck out for the opposite shore, yelling a cheerful good morning to a Naval Assistant Surgeon and three Marine officers who were sitting on a log, pulling on their clothes.

"Beat us to it, eh?" Pepper laughed up at them, shaking the water from his eyes.

"Right on the job before anybody else. That's the Navy way, you know!" the youngest of the Marine officers swaggered.

"Oh, sure!" from Pepper as he promptly dis-

appeared under the water again, to hide the grin on his mouth.

"What did that guy say, Billy?" came the indignant voice of Wardy Brown, as he swam over to the other scout.

"That it was the Navy way to be always before anybody else, or something like that," Billy grunted.

"Well, I like that! Guess the Navy wouldn't be here now if our Service hadn't cleaned up their old camp site so they wouldn't all die with malaria. Bet you there isn't a one of those Marines that would know an Anopheles stands on her head when she bites and waves her hind legs in the air. And as to Quads and Puncs and Crucians, with their four or five spots, or yellow bites out of their wings, or the three little spots on sixth vein of their wings, why, I bet you hats those men never even heard of such things, 'cept the Navy doctor, of course."

"Aw, hold your horses, Wardy," Billy grinned, as he stretched out the muscles under his satiny skin and floated peacefully on his back, "Pepper took it all as a joke, and that's just what it is. We Service boys work for the work's sake—the Chief says so, and we know our sanitation was a dandy job, thanks to you, old scout, and that's all we care for."

"That's the Service spirit right enough, old son," from the scout master as he swam up.

"Time to go back to camp now. Fall out to put on some clothes!"

"Fall out to put on some clothes, sir!" from the laughing Patrol leaders, and the other scouts along with them scrambled to the bank and slipped wet, glistening small bodies into underclothing, stockings, shoes and pants, slipping their campaign shirts over their heads as they darted up the narrow path for Camp Ross and a hasty breakfast.

Waiting for them, seated on a fallen log, was Miss Penrod, and the boys promptly saluted her scout fashion.

"I am going to hike over to Dolittle with you, cousins all," the nurse cried gayly, "and so are the Chief and Buster."

"Bully for you, Anne," young Pepper smiled gratefully. "That's first rate. Since Buster is going away with the Chief to establish sanitary training camps in Louisiana, I—I'll need an Assistant Scout Master dreadfully, and—and"

"Cheer up, Pepper!" Miss Penrod dimpled. "I rather expect to be a full Scout Master myself for the next two weeks at the Bazaar, thank you. After that you may once more be supreme, while I sail away over the ocean for my poor, suffering Neuilly and France."

"Oh, Anne," the young fellow cried, moistening his dry lips miserably, his face rather

white under his freckled skin, "I—I—oh, do you have to go back?"

Miss Penrod's eyes were quite starry as she looked up from her log at the earnest, set young face above her.

"Yes, I have to go back and help, dear Pepper," she said and then, with a queer little laugh, "But if you are good and patient with these youngsters, in a year or two, well, maybe I'll apply for a permanent commission as Assistant Scout Master to Pepper's Boy Scouts, wherever they may be."

A few minutes later the Chief joined them, accompanied by Buster, a small package in his hand, and after a few words with Pepper, he spoke to Wardy, who called the scouts together and had them stand at attention, his round face quite radiant.

"Boys," the gray headed Chief said steadily, smiling down on them lovingly, "as head of your local troop committee I have several awards to give. In the first place I have asked your scout master, as a favor, to let me pin these merit badges for Public Health on each of you. Since you have all just passed your examinations from Tenderfoot grade to that of second class scouts you can use them. Everyone of you has earned his badge. Then I have also a badge in First Aid for Wardy, and for Billy; and the rank of a Life Scout for Billy, as he has won his five necessary merit

badges, with some to spare—First Aid, Physical Development, Personal Health, Public Health, Life Saving, Cooking, Music, and Swimming. Frankly, the last two he won, those at our good Camp Ross, seem to me the biggest. Also, he won the affection and respect of his old Chief, for whatever that may be worth to him, and the praise of his Surgeon General, sent him in this personal letter from Washington.”

Billy Hoover, pink and very erect, and so proud and happy that he could not at first speak, stepped shyly forward and stood at attention before his Chief, looking up into his lean, clever face with grateful, rather misty eyes, full of the straightforward love of a young boy for a great, world-famous man.

“Thank you, sir,” he said simply, giving the scout salute. “Thank you and the Surgeon General and the National Commissioners, and—and all of you fellows,” wheeling round on his brother scouts, “I—I never knew what good stuff Boy Scouts were made of till all of us worked and played here together at Camp Ross. Oh, gee, fellows! hasn’t our Service been good to us?—the Chief, and our old scout master, Pepper, and Buster, and—and everybody, staff officers, sanitary engineers and all? I’m the only one of the troop that won’t come back, except Buster, and, oh, fellows, I’ll miss you all like anything, only, well—I’ve got to

pitch right in on my Bull Dogs as soon as I get back to Charleston and the Bazaar work is finished, and teach them same as the Chief's taught us, to be real Service boys," then, his voice rather husky, "It's so tough, breaking up like this, but—but I guess that's part of our Service too."

Happy, purposeful scouts swung along the dusty road toward Dolittle an hour later, with old Dr. Iron, Jimmy Neems, Lake White and a few others waving them a friendly good-bye. Mr. Hollis was already in New Orleans paving the way for the coming of his great Chief.

"Sing, sing, you scouts!" Miss Penrod called to the little army of olive drab figures. "Strike up, Billy-Billy!" and with Billy's velvety smooth contralto leading, the fresh young voices of the boys rang out clearly, Buster, the Assistant Surgeon General, and Pepper, adding a deep throated chorus, the youngest officer smiling a little piteously at the nurse, who returned the smile bravely.

"There the wild flowers spring,
And the wee throstles sing,

And in sunshine the waters are sleepin',
But the broken hairt it kens nae second spring,
Though resigned it may be, while we're greetin' "

So sang the Black Watch moving over the miles of dusty road in France, marching on to

death, and so sang the scouts, moving on from their first great victory. They were near the Marine camp now, swinging along at a sturdy pace, their voices as fresh as the September morning itself.

"Then ye'll tak the high road and I'll tak the low road,
An' I'll be in Scotland before ye.
But sorrow it is there, an' mony hairts are sair,
On the bonny, bonny banks o' Loch Lomond."

"We are together, Buster," the Assistant Surgeon General said at the end of the song, "so try not to be unhappy."

"I'm not unhappy, Dad," the boy answered, his handsome head thrown back bravely enough. "It's always good-bye in our Service, only for you and me. We've always more work to do somewhere further on. It's so good to be with you, my father."

The Assistant Surgeon General laid one hand quietly on his boy's shoulder and they walked along together, watching the two Patrol Leaders of the Sea Gulls, who, side by side, were moving in the same attitude as the father and son, Billy's left hand on Wardy's shoulder, for the tow headed boy stumbled a little now and then, his scout hat pulled down over his blue eyes.

"Oh, Billy," he said quickly, "I—I wish you were coming back."

"But we'll be just as good chums, Wardy," Billy answered comfortingly, "and—our Service is always saying good-bye, to go off into strange places and find work for other folks, old scout. Say, got your clown's suit?"

"Sure, it's in Miss Penrod's duffle, and I bet I wear the littlest hat at the great Allied Bazaar. You just see if I don't. Gee, Billy-Billy won't it be great when the Senator opens that school over at the Folly Quarters on the twenty-sixth, for all the boys down here, Gopher and Coonie and Reggie and Ed and all the rest of us. Van is going to stay too, and we'll keep my old Folly Quarters looking just lovely, Billy, so you can have fun here again with us next summer. You'll come again, won't you old scout?"

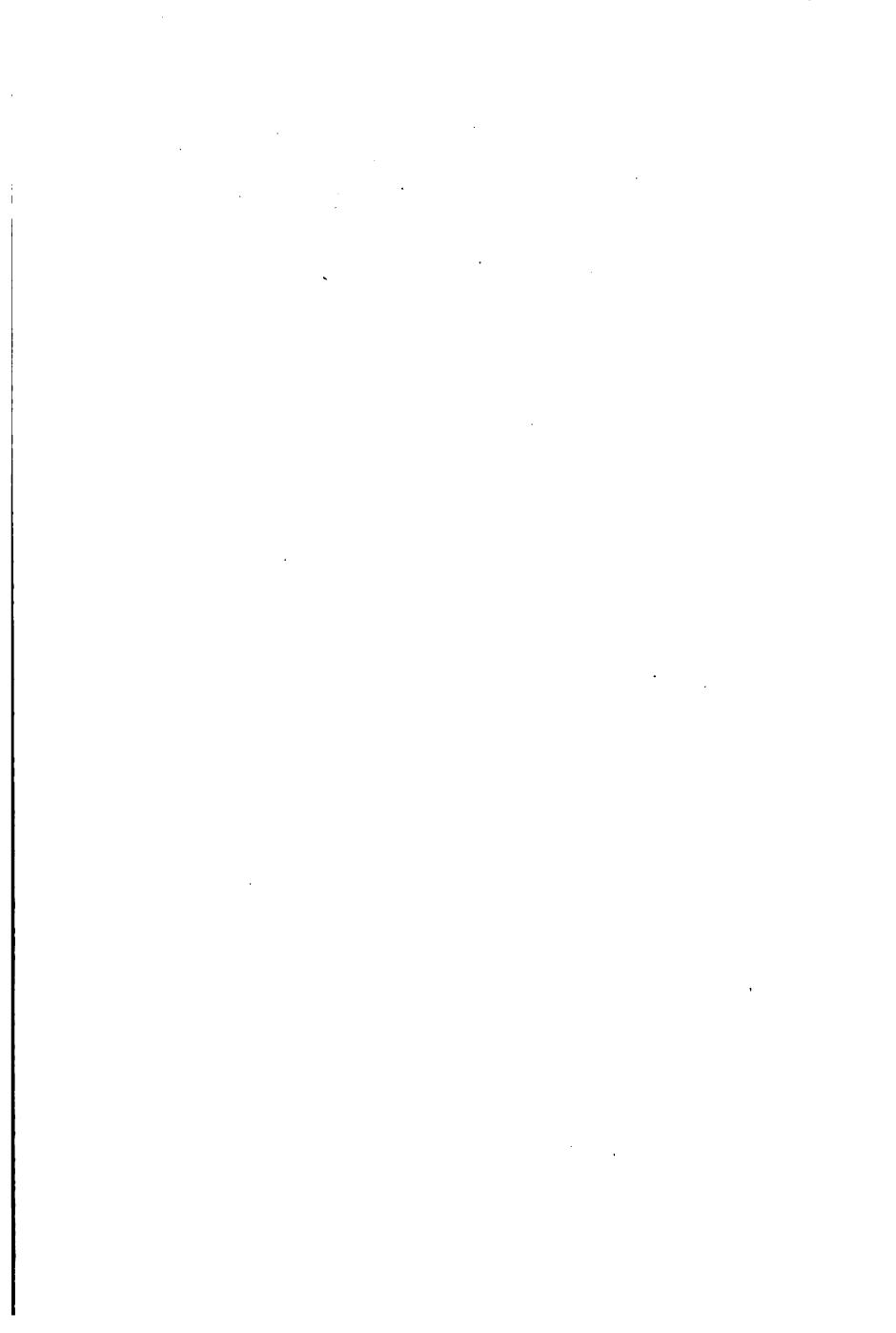
"You bet I will! I've saved over a hunderd and twenty dollars from my three months' salary, and mother can have it all, but I'll earn some more before next summer all right. Maybe Buster and the Chief can come down, too. Lots of the old crowd for the old life at Camp Ross again!"

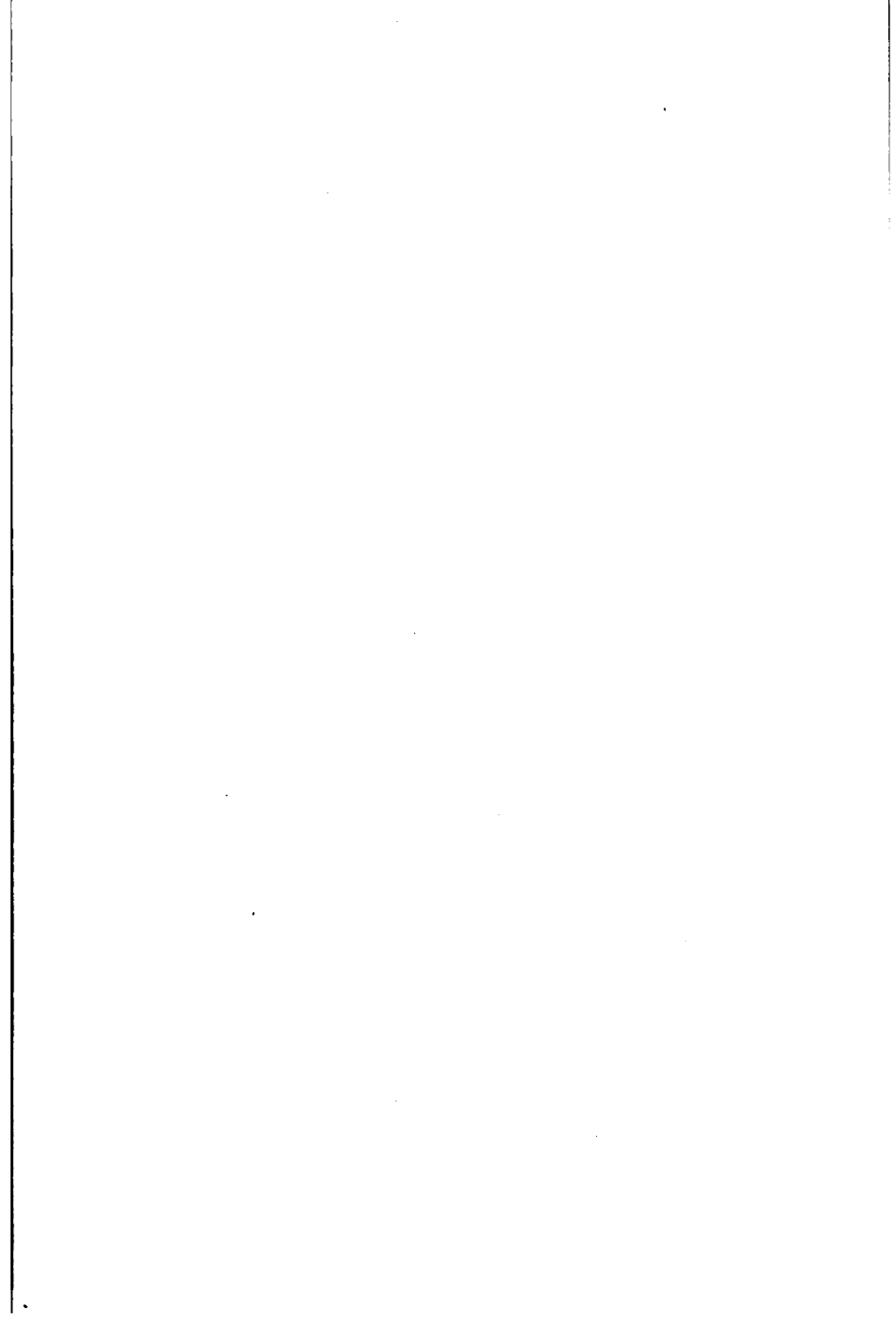
"Cheer up, you scouts!" called Pepper, squaring his shoulders after a whispered word of comfort from the trained nurse and a warning not to neglect his boys, who seemed a little solemn as they got further and further away from their camp, now and then looking back rather sadly at the slim, erect figure of their

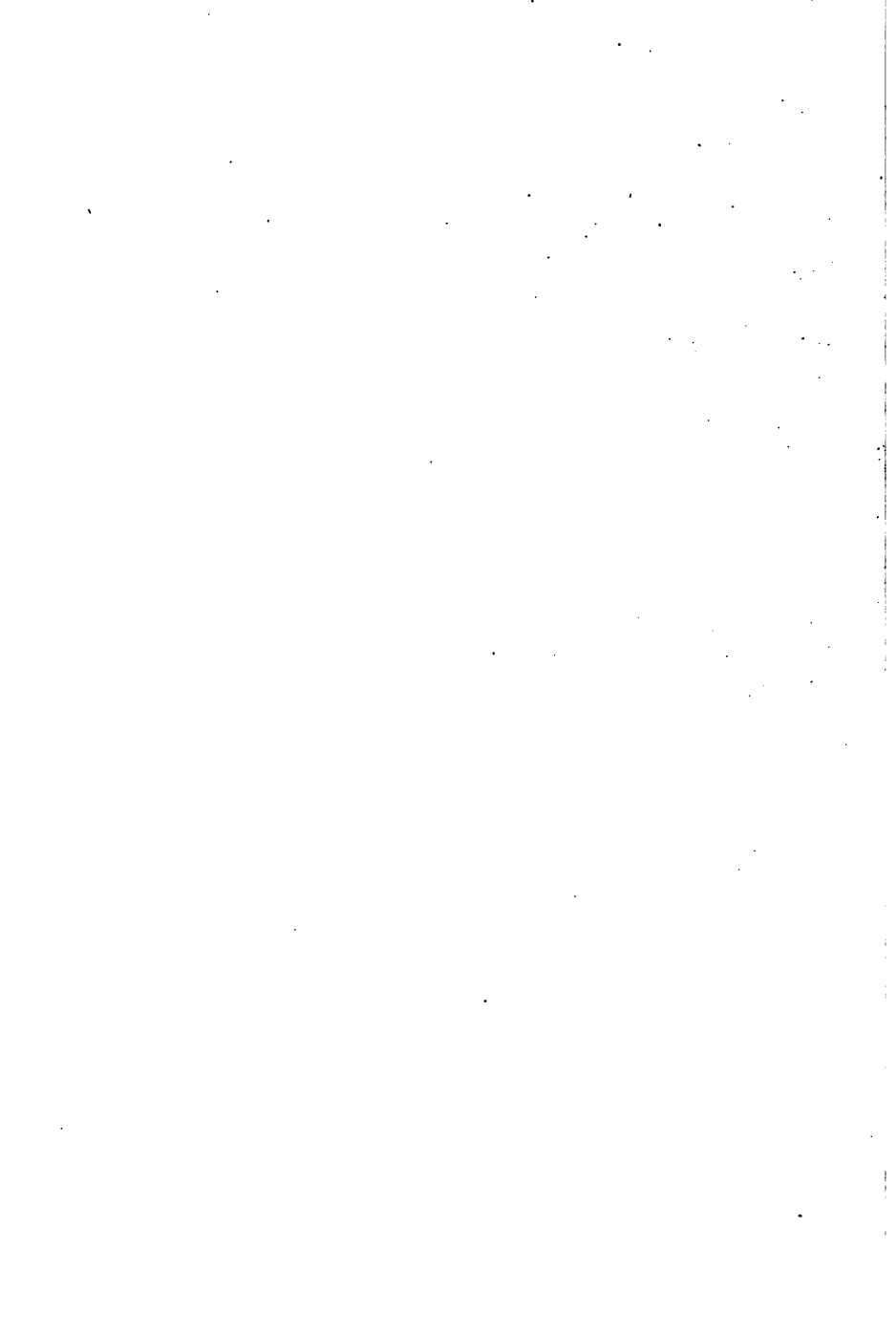
khaki-clad Chief, so soon to leave them. "Cheer up, you Boy Scouts! Remember Buster's camp talk, old sons. Now, one—two—three—all together: "Are we downhearted?"

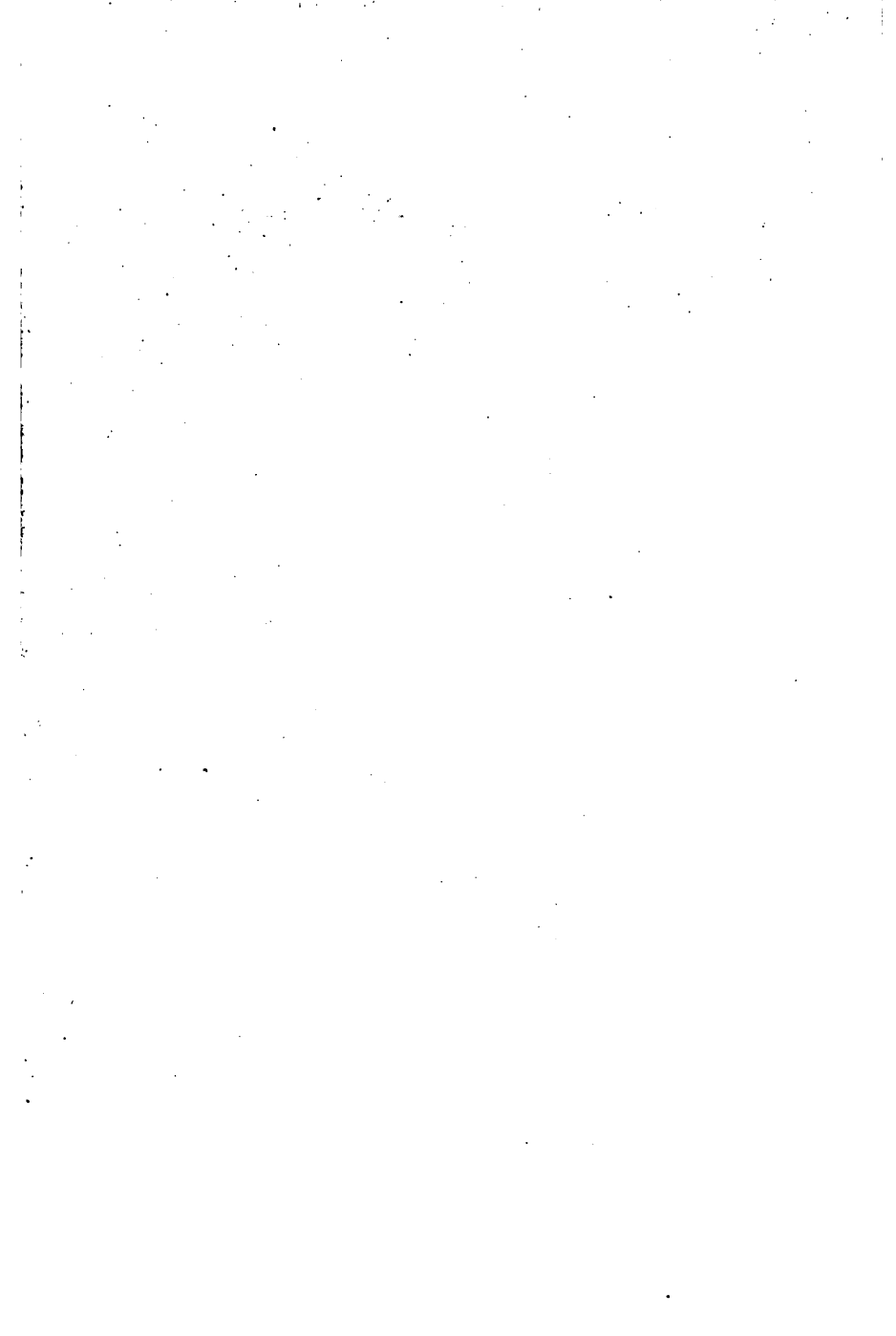
And in a firm, cheerful roar from twenty-four bare, sun-browned young throats "NO!" and they swung along again briskly, shoulders squared, Billy and Wardy still together, but feeling only happy now, while from the nearby camp on Sago there rang out suddenly, clear and sweet, the sound of a Marine Corps bugle, the sign so longed for, by all of them from the Chief to the youngest Scout, the sign of work well done by the Service boys of Camp Ross.

THE END









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